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Reg. No. 1317

Vol. XVII—No. 1

Stri-Dharma

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S INDIAN ASSOCIATION

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR OF BOOKS
15 NOV 1933
MADRAS

NOVEMBER, 1933

Subscription Rates

India, Rs. 5 *W.I.A. Members, Rs 3* *Foreign, 10 Sh.*

Single Copy, As. 8

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OFFICIAL ORGAN

STRI DHARMA

Editor : MRS: H. M. DADABHOY.

Headquarters : PANTHEON GARDENS, EGMORE, MADRAS.

Women's Indian Association

OBJECTS

1. To present to Women their responsibilities as daughters of India.

2. To secure for every girl and boy the right of Education through schemes of Compulsory Primary Education, including the teaching of religion.

3. To secure the abolition of child-marriage and other social evils.

4. To secure for Women the vote for Municipal and Legislative Councils on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men

5. To secure adequate representation of Women on Municipalities, Taluk and Local Boards, Legislative Councils and Assemblies.

6. To secure for Women the right to vote and to be elected for the Council of State.

7. To establish equality of rights and opportunities between Men and Women.

8. To help Women to realise that the future of India lies largely in their hands: for as wives and mothers they have the task of training, guiding and forming the character of the future rulers of India.

9. To band Women into groups for the purpose of self-development and education, and for the definite service of others.

Women who agree and will co-operate with the Objects and Organization of the Association may become members. Groups of Women having the same aims can be affiliated to the Women's Indian Association.

Local Branches are self-governing and make their own arrangements.

ORGANIZATION

The Association, which has a central organization at the W. I. A. Headquarters, Pantheon Gardens, Egmore, Madras, was started on May 8, 1917, and has grown and increased steadily ever since. It now has 72 Branches, 24 Centres and over 4,000 members.

Branches are formed in every place where possible, with a local Secretary to arrange the work to suit local conditions and report to Headquarters.

The political policy of the Association is to work for Reforms through the Legislative Councils.

The aims, ideals and work of the Association are on a religious but non-sectarian basis.

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The Editor does not hold herself responsible for opinions expressed in signed or initialled articles or by correspondents.

Note :—All communications regarding Editorial matter and reviews should be addressed to the Editor, Stri Dharma, Pantheon Gardens, Egmore, Madras.

Subscribers are requested to mention their subscription number when reporting complaints or change of address, etc. These communications should reach our office by the 15th of every month.

Group photo taken at the English Session of the Madras Constituent Conference of the All-India Women's Conference, on "Educational and Social Reform, held at Museum Theatre on 21st October, 1933, under the presidentship of Dr. Miss E. McDougall.

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Stri-Dharma

Vol. XVII. NOVEMBER, 1933 No. 1

OFFICE OF THE ... 15 NOV 1933

NOTES AND COMMENTS

WOMEN'S TRIBUTE TO RAJA RAMMOHAN ROY

As the courageous champion of the women's cause, he has surpassed any reformer, ancient or modern. You can examine the history of any nation. You will not find a type like Raja Rammohan Roy. His ardent and devoted labour for the abolition of "Sati", the very cruel and inhuman custom of burning widows alive, whether young or old, whether willing or not, on the funeral pyre of their dead husbands, his vehement protest against that custom by his writings, by his speeches, by his appeals and his petitions to the authorities, which form a precious document, will alone make him immortal and will entitle him to the eternal gratitude of the entire womanhood of the world. At a time when not a single woman, in the east or in the west, could raise her voice against such an oppressive custom he dared to challenge his own sex to prove that women were in any way inferior to men, and that women deserved such treatment at the hands of men. His own estimate of women is seen in one of his famous paragraphs which is the sacred duty of all women to study so as to pay their respects to the one who has felt for their lot, for their sufferings and for their inferior position in society a hundred years before.

Equally strong and convincing was his advocacy against polygamy and child-marriage. In his will, he has stated that if any one of his heirs should marry more than one wife, he should be disinherited of his property.

His essay on the "Ancient rights of females" shows that if be had lived long enough he would have reformed the Hindu laws of inheritance so as to give a share to the wives, to the widows and to the daughters from their ancestral property. When we, women, are now in a position to demand equal opportunities and equal citizen rights and adequate representation in the future constitution of our country, it is incumbent on us, nay it is our sacred duty, to express our love and gratitude, our reverence, to that great personality who was the first to raise the banner of revolt against all oppressive customs that hamper the women's progress and has so ably advocated sex-equality on our behalf.

All-India Women's Conference

The Eighth annual session of the All-India Women's Conference, on Educational and Social Reform, Madras Constituency, was held at the Museum Theatre on 21--10--33. We have published the resolutions and presidential address in this issue of Stri Dharma. These conferences are a yearly landmark in the women's work all over India. Preparatory to the annual All-India Session which is held in various places in rotation, Calcutta being this year's choice. These constituent Conferences are held in all the different cities and towns, to pass resolutions on some of the most vital and necessary reforms affecting women and children. Within the few short years of its inception the All-India Women's Conference has grown into a phenomenal influence in the life of the country; a most comprehensive educational and social reform programme forms part of its activities. Its constituencies and sub-constituencies form a net work that spreads all over India from one end of the country to the other, numbering 118 in all. The most outstanding feature of the great body is that it consists of women of every known community in India besides many of our Western sisters. Throughout these years these women with different traditions, habits, customs, and religious belief have stood on a common platform asking for the same reforms, bearing the same disabilities and united in one common demand for the amelioration of women and children. To the advocates of communal electorates and communal division this should be a living example and illustration of the unity that can grow from a common ideal.

Passing away of Mr. V. J. Patel

It seems our sad duty month after month to record our sorrow at some fresh loss to the nation. We had but just recorded the death of Dr. Annie Besant and now another great fighter for the freedom of India and a champion of liberty has been taken away. At this stage in the country's struggle when we need great leaders to guide and co-ordinate all the constructive forces of the nation, it seems our misfortune to loose one by one, the greatest men and women who for so many years have guided the country through some of the most trying and formative years. Mr. Patel will live in the loving memory of his countrymen and women for this unrivalled services and sacrifice. He will go down to posterity, as the most dignified president of the Legislative Assembly. In his days that body was nearest to being a truly representative national assembly and his vast knowledge, his strength and firmness of character and his courageous

stand by all his convictions will remain for ever a glowing memory in every Indian heart. Throughout the years of office, his entire income except a very small amount, was given for the use of his country. His last message to India was of his unstinted love. His last prayer and wish on earth was for the freedom of his country. Though none can take the place that is left vacant by these great souls, let us pray that the need of the times may bring forth leaders with the same wisdom, love, and devotion to India, that she needs so badly, at a time when she is being exploited not only by a foreign interest, but by those of her own children who have forgotten what it means "to love one's country before oneself."

The ill-Fated Sarda Act

We have published this month a Memorandum by a leading English woman, M.P. on certain outstanding weak points in the Sarda Act and some very interesting and instructive statistics about the appalling increase in child-wives and child-widows since the passing of the Act! The romance and tragedy that are revealed by prosaic figures of statistics are worth studying. We commend the suggestions that have been put forward in this memorandum for the thoughtful consideration of all our readers. That the Act needs amending so that it becomes an effective deterrent to this form of crime, for we can call it by no other name, is obvious and yet we hear daily of new bills calling for the repeal of the Act! The Act was passed with the support of the govenment and a vast body of public opinion and we must see that it is further strengthened to make it feared and respected like any other law. Nothing worth having can be easily gained and opposition should only prove a further incentive to those who realise the vital need of removing this most insiduous and poisonous canker that is eating away the vitals of India.

Maternal Morality in Madras

We are glad to read that such a keen interest is being taken by the government in this most important subject and an enquiry has been made by Dr. A. Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar that will lead to some very useful and necessary changes and additions to the efficiency of those departments of hospitals etc., which deal with women's cases. It is deplorable to note that in spite of the existing hospitals and other medical institutions in the city maternal morality should be 3 to 4 times higher in Madras than elsewhere. It shows how great is the unexplored field. We wish the government all success in its efforts to improve this sad state of affairs and provide better care for the poor mothers in the city.

"WOMEN AND THE FUTURE OF INDIA"

"ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN TO DO HIS DUTY."

BY MISS SUBUR Kh. MUGASETH.

At no period in the history of *our* country could she have appealed to us more truly than she does to-day: "India expects every woman to do her duty." Our motherland is in the throes of a great re-awakening, a re-awakening which must affect all aspects of life, all classes of people, men and women. For centuries, the ideal for Indian women had been that of V. Cent Athen, an endorsement of the Periclean saying that "her glory is greatest, whose praise or blame is least bruited on the lips of men." But that point of view has changed with kaleidoscopic rapidity.

"What are we coming to in these godless days when our women grow shameless and unsexed?" the narrow-minded in India exclaim in consternation.

"What bug of perversity and subversion has bitten them?" the Westerner in India is asking in puzzled annoyance.

"What man has ever understood the conduct of woman?" moaned an ancient Hindu sage, full 3000 years ago.

Strangely enough, it is to the past, the past of more than 3000 years ago' that we must turn, not only for a true explanation of the events of to-day, but for a true understanding of what has prompted those events.

Those who hold the common belief that women in India always occupied a very inferior position until the advent of the British and the introduction of English education in India, curiously enough fail to see the anachronism in their belief. No country could have attained to the height of civilisation to which India attained, had her women been kept down and denied equal opportunities and rights as her men. Even a cursory glance over the history of India in the Vedic times shows us by what a rich mental and spiritual background the Aryan woman of ancient India was surrounded.

In the Vedic period, women took part freely in social and even in political life; they travelled about freely, suffered from no such disabilities as purdah and child marriage; their rights of inheritance and succession were fully recognised, whether they were married, single, or widows: all those who are now held so reverentially as great ideals—Sita, Savitri, Draupadi—were those who enjoyed a high degree of freedom and who asserted their individuality: in the celebration of religious functions and rituals, they had a special place of importance assigned to them. They composed and chanted hymns at the Vedic sacrifices. In the 5th chapter of the "Rig Veda", we hear of Viswara of the race of Athri, composing hymns. Lopamudra, the wife of Agasthya, was another famous composer. And the hymn which is said to contain the nucleus of the later Vedanta Philosophy claims as its author Vak, Ambrhi's daughter.

With the advent of Buddhism, there was a still greater impetus to their learning and achievements. A woman, cousin of the great King Asoka, went to Ceylon and founded a school of philosophy there, and trained women in several arts. Buddha's great message of renunciation fired the hearts of the richest and the poorest of men and women. And women who found peace at the feet of the Master, inspired by love for him and his teaching, wrote the well-known Therigatha or psalms. Vasitti, Ubbiri, Sumana, Shama, Mutta, Mittika are only a few among the many names of women composers. When Buddhism gave place once again to Hinduism, we have the famous Saraswathi, who was so renowned for her learning that her very name to-day symbolises knowledge and learning. Among the emotional writers of the Bhakti school, is the greatest of Indian poetesses, Mirabai,

the Sappho of Indian song, while Jana and Andal are two other names that deserve to stand by hers. The intellectual side of the Bhakti school is represented by women-writers in all vernaculars, Avvai in Tamil, Mahadevika in Kanarese, Muktabai, in Marathi, Lal Deb, Dayabai and many more.

Later still, even at the Moghul court, in spite of the great drawback of purdah there were women learned in art, literature and philosophy. Nur Jehan was not only a great ruler, but a gifted writer, and is the authoress of the beautiful epitaph on her tomb, which (losing all its poetry in translation), runs: "On the tomb of us, poor, there will be neither a light, nor a flower, nor the wings of a moth, nor the voice of a nightingale."

The great artists in music in those days were women; for music then formed an integral part of women's education. In painting and art, woman was the artist's model. The glory of Ajantan art is woman. As a well-known art critic writes: 'Woman to these ancient artists of India was not a temptress, a seductress, but an eternal companion on the road of destiny, who ennobles and enlivens life's pathway. Ascetics as these artists were, they saw divinity in womanhood, and hence this "Worship of Woman in Ajanta."

Nor did women fail in action. In the Vedic ages, Kaikayi and Satyabhama had distinguished themselves on the battle-field. Much later, their spirit is seen, still alive, in the Mahratta horsewomen, dazzlingly skilful in their mastery of riding and spear craft, in Chand Bibi, who led her own army against the Mahomedan invader, in the Rani of Jhansi who fought with ferocious valour against the British. And that spirit is not dead—but three years ago, women who had been gentle, retiring, self-effacing, proved that their timidity could change to sheer defiance: on the great Tilak Day in 1930, they braved the white-officered Bombay police for 12 hours on end, faced by a heavy monsoon, going without food for a whole day, seated on the slushy streets throughout the night. Dressed in plain, rough garments, our women are to be found in the streets, in the slums, facing crowds before liquor-shops, pleading with total strangers, braving the police, courting arrest and lathi charges, ready to undergo unflinchingly the worst of hardships.

Ten years ago, such an event would not have been dreamt of:—But we cannot understand the so-called revolutionary change that has come over the women of India, unless we realise that in the heart and brain of Indian womanhood, the shining force of life may have slumbered but could not die. It is because the present women's movement in India has such a heritage as its foundation, and such a past as its back ground, that we confidently hope, women will bring an equally great future to India. Intellectually and psychologically, she has not lost her honoured place of old: the attacks of external influences affected only her external position, so that the present women's movement in India is not so much the establishment of a new order, as a revival and regaining of her lost prestige, but with a distinct desire and attempt to adjust her position in agreement with modern conditions. Because of this, it also differs very much from its sister-movement in Europe. Though in India, man restricted the influence and scope of woman's work for many centuries, still when the day came for her to emerge from seclusions imposed on her, and take her rightful place along with him, it did not strike him as anything strange; he did not view it with the apprehension or dismay with which man is viewing the so-called feminist movement in the West. The movement in India is not in any sense a rebellion or revolt against man; it is not actuated by any spirit of competition; it is a movement of calm assertion—and this is why it promises to be of immense help to the future of the whole country.

It is remarkable how much has been achieved during the last few years—women's activities have spread over the social, medical, educational, and to some extent political, spheres. But these achievements are only first steps forward: what *has* been done only points to the potential abilities of Indian women in shaping their country's future.

Ever since the birth of the National Congress, all-India Women's Conferences have been in vogue, though not on a large organised scale. 1910 saw the inauguration of the Bharat-Stri-Mahamandal, in the wake of which followed the Women's Indian Association of Madras, started in 1917, by Mrs. Jinarajadasa, and Mrs. Cousins which is now the largest Women's Association in India, that has a unitary and all-round programme of work, social, educational and political, embracing 72 branches, 23 centres, and nearly 4000 members. Socio-religious reforms, with the founding of institutions like the Arya-Samaj and the Brahmo-Samaj have given an added impetus to the movement, and can be of great help in breaking down social and religious prejudices. Curiously enough, these Women's Associations were not the direct outcome of the spread of literary education among the women; their labours encouraged women's education; but they themselves were the manifestation of the general spirit of the times. On the other hand, education and the influx of ideas from England and from the West, have helped them in later years, in their organisation and further development.

Prominent among the pioneers of the Women's Movement, were Rama Bai Ranade, Pandita Ramabai, Sarojini Naidu, Saraladevi Chaudhrani and Saroj Nalini, to mention only some of the most famous. I cannot help remarking in particular, on the wonderful institution known as the Sharada Sadan, started by Pandita Ramabai, which from a small beginning—it began as an institution for the education of about 50 high-caste girls and widows—grew so large and so beneficial under her capable management, that it soon embraced a Mukti Sadan, or House of Salvation, for the undisciplined girls of the poorest classes and for the children of the famine-stricken areas, and within 4 or 5 years, had 1900 pupils as inmates. It is an organisation which must be the model for many other sister institutions of the future. The infants are occupied in kindergarten classes. Teachers are trained in a separate department; an Industrial School opened with garden fields, oil presses, dairy, laundry, departments for baking, sewing, weaving and embroidery, for grain-parching and dyeing.

Another great leader, who worked out her motto, " Life is a sacred trust," in that wonderful Home of Service, the Seva Sadan founded and organised by her, was Srimathi Ramabai Ranade. The principles she set forth as the aims of her now-colossal institution must be the watch-words of all women-workers for the future—to teach and educate women by means of regular classes, to impart to them instruction of a religious, literary, scientific, medical and industrial character; to teach them the principles of First Aid, Hygiene, Sanitation, Domestic Economy; to enable women to participate intelligently in all domestic, social and national responsibilities, to inculcate in their minds the principles of self-reliance and mutual helpfulness; to train women to render in a patriotic spirit, educational, medical and philanthropic service to the mother-land, and to their brothers and sisters in specially backward areas, and to promote greater fellowship and understanding amongst the women of India.

But the country needs many more organisations like these—here is an opportunity for every married woman and widow to work for her sisters. There are a great number of widows going into Colleges and Hospitals for specialised training; they become teachers and nurses, and like sisterhoods and cloisters in the West, consecrate their lives to some special service for their country. There are thousands of women, married, unmarried, widowed, who are waking up to their real responsibilities in public matters; but what they need is proper organisation; if educated and trained on the lines of those few who are working in the Sharada Sadan, they can help to solve so many of the problems great and small, that are besetting India's way to progress.

"The sky remains infinitely vacant for earth to build there its heaven with dreams" cannot be said more truly of any sphere in Indian life, than of the possibilities of social uplift. The idea of service is not foreign to the Indian mind. It has

always had its place in the life of society, though in the past it has largely found its expression in the home or in the communal group. But ever since people began to think in national terms, the idea of service has become a much bigger thing; with the dawn of industrialism in India, certain conditions have been created in cities which are centres of industry, such as Bombay, Ahmedabad, Sholapur, Nagpur with their cotton-mills, Calcutta and Jamshedpur with their jute and steel manufacturies, and towns on the west-coast with their tea, coffee and rubber plantations. In all these industries, women are employed; in the cotton mills of Bombay City alone, there are over 30,000 women employees. The employment of women in industry means a good many things. It means a complete disorganisation of home-life; having to work between 12 and 16 hours every day, and to attend to her household duties and children as well, she is practically always on the point of complete exhaustion. Again, the conditions under which they live and work are equally bad: the 12—16 hours a day are spent in the noisy, close atmosphere of the crowded work-room, and the rest in an equally unhealthy room of a chawl, shared with 5 or 6 other inmates. The housing conditions are aggravated by insanitary ways of living due to ignorance and poverty. The overcrowded slums of any big industrial city are a very difficult and important problem and the women of India must help to find a solution. Here is a tremendous task for willing hands. There is just as much inside the work-room as outside it, that needs improvement. The conditions of work in the factories, and their supervision and amelioration can only be effected by legislation; but previous to legislation must come the task of creating and educating public opinion about facts connected with women's employment. And it is only those who understand these needs and have studied them, that can put forward the case most effectively.

Moreover, workers are needed to educate the opinion of employees themselves; these do not take advantages of facilities wherever they are provided—in the way of welfare activities, co-operative credit societies or stores because there is a general reluctance among them to try anything new, failure to see the use of it and also, ignorance, of their existence. The social worker has to do everything in the way of creating interest in the people by personal methods. She must be a necessary part of the management of every good concern, employing women. It is only the educated and the trained who can take up this work in the industrial quarters of a city, which demands a great deal of initiative and courage.

A great deal, moreover, can be done for the slums of cities, by "Settlement Work:" nothing could benefit the poorest classes of our districts, as such centres of friendliness, where people of all classes and positions meet. The settlements in the East End of London give relief and help to those who are little affected by general measures and one cannot help thinking of the tremendous possibilities of such settlements in the work of educating and uplifting the masses of India, in adjusting the relationships of different groups, above all in bridging the gulf, not only between the poorer and the richer, but specially between castes and creeds, and in encouraging them to sink their differences and their prejudices, for the common good.

If, from the city, we turn to the village, we find crying necessities there—the terrible apathy of the agricultural labourer towards questions of education and hygiene; extreme poverty and ignorance. The woman-worker here needs to live among the villagers to find out their needs. She can play a great part in rural reconstruction by starting with the women of the village and through the mothers, reaching the children in their homes and schools and so build up the life and education of future citizens of India. The possibilities of a Settlement in rural areas are just as great as in the crowded districts of a city; a great boon to the health of a village is a district nurse and health visitor—such workers have done

a great deal in raising the level of health in some of the poorest parts of England. In an Indian village where medical help is totally inadequate, she would be a real blessing to many.

India, at this stage, stands in great need of two types of women-workers. Leaders and organisers like Josephine Butler and Octavia Hill in England, like Ramabai Ranade, Anandibai Joshi and Pandita Ramabai in India who seeing the needs of the people, are able to create new institutions to deal with new problems, who come with the special capabilities of planning a special kind of work ; and the more humble worker who carries out these plans in obedience to the guiding hand. Both in the city and in the village, there is great scope for organised work for children and young delinquents. The Children's Home in Bombay was opened only two years ago. The Bombay Children's Act passed in 1924, was not put into operation till 1927 ; for the working of this Act, institutions like the Remand Home and the Children's Court, had to come into being. In the first annual report of the Children's Aid Society, the Secretary remarked : " Bold facts and figures point to the reality of the need for the operation of the Act, for the continued existence of the Children's Aid Society and for the wide expansion of its activities in order that its objective may be attained." In the Children's Court, Honorary Lady Magistrates have been doing invaluable service ; their work requires particular tact. The Secretary of the Children's Aid Society remarks in her statement : " The work entailed in dealing with children of this type is far from easy. The right type of trained and educated worker is required. A new field of social service is opening up, but the needs of India's destitute and delinquent children will remain unsatisfied till educated Indian women respond whole-heartedly to the appeal for efficient workers." The children of to-day will be the men and women of to-morrow, and unless we attack the root cause of evil, we cannot hope to eradicate it.

Social work in India must necessarily be linked with medical service, if it is to produce any fruit for the future. There is no nobler and more useful profession for women in India to-day than that of medicine. In this sphere, the Medical College in Madras will always be remembered for having been the first in India to open its doors to women just over 50 years ago. To-day there are in the whole of India, only 6 Medical Colleges and 13 medical schools that take in women ; of these one College and 4 Schools are entirely for women, and staffed only by women, the remaining have co-education. In medicine, again, women have not met with the same opposition from men doctors as did their sister-pioneers in the West, Indian men doctors realise only too well that in no profession is co-operation between men and women, so invaluable and so necessary as in the medical. The improvement of the health and physique of the millions of women in India, depends to a very great degree on the untiring labour of women doctors, not only in the field of curative medicine, but more important still, in preventive medicine and in moral uplift of humanity.

Women's hospitals and women doctors are far too few to meet the growing demand—in the town, in the industrial city, above all in the village, they are required at all costs. Often, patients are brought in from great distances, fatigued and exhausted from the tiring journey over rugged cart tracks, for want of medical aid at closer quarters. Much pain and suffering could be relieved and many more lives saved, if rural dispensaries could be established. A great number of women students are taking to medicine ; after their training, they should be encouraged, not to stay in the cities, but to settle in rural areas, to go out into their own villages, and there, they should be helped to form dispensaries. A women doctor in a village would be an inestimateable boon ; she would be able to divide her time between dispensary work and child-welfare, health-talks and health exhibitions The village is the first field for reform ; the local and indigenous doctors must be persuaded to give up their former fallacious methods—a very trying task indeed.

But once these are brought round, by the tact of the trained worker, they prove very helpful in the vital task of the physical regeneration of the village.

In the industrial cities, there is a growing demand for the more highly qualified type of women doctors, to act as medical inspectors in factories, and look after the women employees and their children. While, in town, city and village, one of the widest fields for medical service has been opened up by the need of maternity and child welfare work. Ignorance and superstition are the two chief factors that prevent access to modern methods—none can help so greatly in raising the masses from their blind following of pernicious customs, as the woman doctor, who by creating sound public opinion, and stimulating agitation against early marriages and the purdah system, lays the firm basis for every other welfare scheme. But for any good results in the future, women doctors must give careful consideration to making their schemes suitable for local needs. Wholesale adoption of western methods has proved in practice only a means of increasing the prejudice of the masses; the only way to success is the evolution of methods adaptable to Indian ways of living and thinking.

It is surprising to see how very greatly the care of women and children has been neglected up to very recent times. The enlightened Government, as well as the ignorant people, have passively acquiesced in the startlingly high rate of mortality among mothers and infants, as "the Toll of Nature" or the "Will of God." Had it not been so, we would have had hospitals for women and children growing up side by side with the general hospitals, whereas it is only since recent agitation, that the larger towns have been fortunate enough in having the former. With the result, that if attempts are made to raise the economic condition of the labouring class, the men's bad physique and small capacity for work, prevent any progress; if children's schools or married women's classes are opened, the sickly mothers and the sickly children bring down the average percentage of attendance to half of what it might have been. Any kind of nation-building activity is frustrated by the miserably poor health and physical strength of the boys and the girls, of the men and the women.

The only way of making up for past neglect is by spending all the time, energy and money, we possibly can, on the care of women and children first. In the hands of the women doctors, lie the educating of public opinion specially that of the women, by holding meetings, giving lectures, organizing baby weeks, magic lantern shows, to be followed up by the formation of associations for nursing and medical work. The town can be used as headquarters from where relays of medical workers are sent to each of the outlying districts in turn, where by personal contact and house-to-house visiting, the village women are persuaded to take an interest in matters of health and sanitation. Medical social workers can do much by organising classes, not only for women and children, but also for men, an increasing number of whom are attending health classes every year.

The salvation of the country lies in the hands of the medically trained women workers, not in the hands of those who delight in denouncing old customs from public platforms, as in the hands of those who carry on their work quietly from house to house. Theirs is the service that cannot be measured by numbers and statistics, but it is none the less certain and far more beneficial. for success, in medico-social work, intensive propaganda should be as much an aim, as large schemes and institutions. In a country like India, the latter cannot prove a success, unless a sufficient amount of individual work is being done at the same time—and for this, the country looks to its women doctors. The medically trained woman can also help in less direct ways by the use of her services on municipal bodies and educational committees. We cannot look forward with hope to the future, unless we encourage the activities and spread over wider parts of the country, the beneficial influence of women doctors.

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To turn from medico-social work to that which is being done by the schools and colleges—much has been achieved in the way of women's education, but nothing has been done to make that education prepare the women to be future citizens of their own country. When under the deadening influence of long wars and foreign invasions, the old educational systems had died out, and the whole cultural inheritance of the Hindus and the Mahomedans was at the very lowest ebb, a new system heralded by Macaulay's famous Minute came into being. And the new system completely ignored the question of women's education; but as the country revived from her torpor, province after province took in hand the question of the education of women. The women of Bombay and Madras gave the lead; Calcutta, Delhi and the other towns closely followed; and women have conquered one obstacle placed in their way by the famous Minute; but they could not grapple with the other. By one stroke of his pen, Lord Macaulay had declared that it was futile to impart oriental learning, and vernacular instruction; the result was that step, which in the long run has proved so injurious to the country, but which for the time being, undeniably produced wonderful results—the introduction of a thoroughly English education in schools and colleges, with English as the medium of instruction. Much as we may criticise the aftermath, we must be always grateful for the knowledge of the English language, which with the magic power of "Open Sesame", opened to India the gates of Western culture. The contact with the West was refreshing and revitalising to the Indian mind tired of wandering in the old grooves; to take only one example of the good results in those early days of western education, we have the poetry of Sarojini Naidu, which, with a masterly command over an alien tongue, breathes all the atmosphere of her own country.

Western education has most certainly left a positive cast in the Indian mind, and a very potent influence on the Indian intellect. School and College education for women has had its most beneficial results, not so much on the intellectual, as on the social side. Perhaps few women's educational institutions in any country have done so much for the breaking down of barriers between castes, communities and classes; as the Women's Colleges, and the co-educational Colleges have added to these, the breaking down of barriers between men and women. While the corporate influence of Women's Colleges is revealed in a body like the Women Graduates' Union, in educational affairs too, men have not been slow to recognise the partnership of women. The Universities of Bombay and Madras have women sitting in their Senates. And a Mahomedan University had as Chancellor, the Begum of Bhopal—perhaps the only woman in the world to hold an office of this nature!

Unfortunately, however, the wholesale adoption of western education has resulted in a loss, that counter-balances the gain. A great deal was lost in spiritual content by the divorcing of education from religion and the home, the two great vitalising forces in Indian life. Even a casual glimpse into the Colleges show the considerable tension that is now prevailing in the life of the Universities. The curriculum of Women's Colleges is being acutely critised regarding the inclusion of unnecessary subjects and the exclusion of those which are of vital importance to women students. But there is room for criticism and for future improvement too, on far more radical lines; a topic which has been dealt with more than once in this Group, (India Group at Oxford) but which cannot be ignored in its reference to women's education—this is the complete ousting of national culture in the Universities. Where separate courses exist for the study of oriental and vernacular learning, they are on lines of the research subjects in this country, meant only for the specialist. Hence the resulting effect on the Indian University student, man or woman; the disquiet and excitement of the few under the influence of a foreign culture unassimilated with their own and the stagnation of the many at the imposition of a culture which they feel so utterly alien.

The present system of education is proving to be of a highly disintegrating and denationalising character. Our literary efforts, as also those in many other spheres, which had gained in freshness by the first contact with the West, have sunk into mere lifeless imitations. We waste our time and energy in trying to master a foreign tongue, while our own vernaculars with all their potential wealth remain neglected. To have accepted a thing blindly without the least thought of the consequences, because it was the thing laid down for us, has been the fate of hypnotised India. Our political life, our social life, our literary life, even our everyday life, has got the impress of the West, till we cannot call our souls our own. Caste distinctions were bad enough; but in spite of the hopes of some, that a different education common to the whole country might have lessened these, the artificial distinctions created by western education, are just now, perhaps, even worse. In spite of all these years of intensive British rule, England has failed to be the mother tongue of the millions And yet in the average Indian school, more periods in a week are devoted to the actual teaching of the English language, than are given to any one subject in schools in England or in Europe: the time spent on other and more necessary subjects is curtailed, with the result that the High School courses are elementary and incomplete and leave too many loose ends. If the students wish to continue their studies, they are compelled to go to the Colleges, with this very fragmentary education provided by the Schools; the Colleges, consequently have to adapt themselves and their standards: and this state of things leads to the cry that the standard of attainment in the Indian Universities is too low, the remark applying with greater force to the women.

But the women students themselves are now keenly critical of, if not directly antagonistic to, a thoroughly westernized education, while the Indian educationlist herself has no illusions. These women, who have benefitted in some measure from the present system of education and have suffered from its disadvantages, are eager to open the eyes of the future, and to attempt a system of education for women, both in Schools and Colleges, that will make them useful and helpful to their country.

One great experiment and the only one of its kind, is the Women's University at Hingne, near Poona, an entirely Indian institution, where a course of studies specially adapted for women and taught in their own vernaculars, has been introduced. There is a great necessity for some means of rapidly bridging over the wide gulf between the cultural achievements of men and women in India: the only means is to resort to the natural method of teaching in the vernacular. At the same time, the importance of English as a language of world-wide culture, and of special importance to India on political and national grounds is recognised, by including it as a compulsory 2nd language. Among other compulsory subjects are Psychology, Study of the Child Mind, Biology, Sociology and History. At Santiniketan is a School and College of a different type—a Women's College, and hostel and Research Institute, a School of Art and Music and finally an institution of Rural Reconstruction—in all departments the medium of instruction is again the vernacular.

But more than in the Women's College, it is in the Girls' High School that the syllabus of studies needs radical change. The girls do not need to be taught the intricacies of Algebra and Geometry in the schools, but they do need the study of domestic economy, of home hygiene, sanitation, and of child welfare; physical training, rhythmic exercises and the cultivation of the arts—dancing, painting, specially music—should be introduced into girls' schools.

The attitude of people towards their art is the best index of their cultural intellectual and spiritual attainment; music was once part and parcel of our consciousness, of our religious life, a household goddess, a familiar friend; and,

in any art so intuitive, so wide-spread as music once was in India, the women had a great share; music must once again become an integral part of a girl's education, and such a subject in the High School would give great scope for women teachers in music, bringing to bear upon it not only enlightened intellects, but awakened souls.

The key note of the whole movement for the reform of women's education, must be the ideal of social service, inculcated at every stage of education. Again, collegiate education in the past 30 years has been swifter and more vivid in its achievements than either primary or secondary education—this will ultimately make our educational system top heavy; it is mass education we need, for a firmer foundation for any schemes to benefit the country. There is also a great necessity and large scope for vocational training, for those who are suited to such training, but women cannot take a share in the future development of the country, until the masses are educated.

Women are now qualifying themselves in law: women lawyers can take a keen interest in the great number of disabilities that the women of India are suffering under laws relating to marriage, divorce, inheritance, guardianship—and can by their specialised knowledge, facilitate the removal of these legal disabilities. In a large sphere of social work also, as in matters relating to the Children's Act and Children's Courts, the participation of women lawyers is valuable. In their political activities, and in their public work as members of Legislative Council etc., their legal training would be of great help.

As regards the status of women in the future Indian constitution, it is a recognised principle everywhere, that the granting of full citizenship rights to women has given a strong impetus to social and administrative reforms in the matters that concern women most closely—education, health, child-welfare, personal laws. It is a fact that to the British rulers, women in India have been so far a persistently neglected responsibility. A distinguished civil servant once said that one maxim sedulously impressed on him, when he went out to India was, "keep your hands off religion and the women." The British government has so faithfully obeyed this maxim, that not only their hands but even their thoughts have been kept off the women, with the result that after so many years of British rule, women are still seriously handicapped in overcoming any obstacles to being deprived of political influence. When for the first time, the women of India officially asked for the grant of Women Suffrage, the Government shelved the matter by declaring in the Reforms Report of 1919, that it was to be a purely domestic matter, to be settled by the different Legislative Councils. Led by the Indian states, when in 1920 Cochin and Travancore granted franchise to women, the Provincial Legislatures within 10 years, also passed the necessary resolutions, so that theoretically, Indian women are enfranchised already on precisely the same terms as men in all the Governors' provinces, except the N. W. Frontier; but these terms are such as to place on the electoral roll, only about $6\frac{1}{2}$ million persons, of whom less than $\frac{1}{20}$ are women. The main qualifications being based on property, they exclude (in the words of the Simon Commission) "nearly all women and the general body of the poor".

Differing in much else, the Government's many advisers have concurred in recommending a substantial increase in the number and proportion of women voters, even the Simon Commission concluding that "a further step in developing women's suffrage in India should be taken now;" it contemplates a ratio of not less and possibly more than 1 woman to 2 men electors. The proposals of the Lothian Commission reduced this proportion from 1 woman elector to $4\frac{1}{2}$ men; finally, the White Paper has reduced it to one woman's vote to 20 men for the Assembly, and probably little if any better proportion for the Provinces.

Even the Simon Commission has acknowledged that women are grappling with problems that specially affect them, and that this movement would be strengthened by increasing the influence of women at elections. The women have a great deal to do but they can do it, only if they have the substantial voting strength behind them. Women are keenly alive to what their future political status will be; they have signified their opposition to the dragging of women into communal electorates. If they are to help the future, they must, above all avoid that division among themselves, which has been encouraged among the men, by putting them into separate communal electorates. So far it has been to their great credit, that they have worked in all fields, without the prejudice of caste and creed: they must continue to do so in the future.

The Importance of social work cannot be stressed too much; women are needed to work among the untouchables and the depressed classes, they have to work against the social evils of child-marriage and purdah; by their own activities and service, they are claiming an important place in India's future. Their ideal, to conclude in the words of our great poet Rabindranath Tagore, is no longer that of "the woman who is only a housewife and nothing more, but the woman who works for the weal of home and community alike. It is no longer the woman whose life is cast in the time-worn mould of provincial custom and tradition that is most needed, but she in whom the streams of intellect and emotion, emanating from this vast universe are not hindered from mingling in a deep and beautiful harmony."

WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN INDIA

(I. H. SHAVIG, B.A., B.T. (ALIG) THE SCINDIA SCHOOL, GWALIOR)

NEED FOR WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN INDIA.—The problem of women's education has a vital bearing upon the social, political and intellectual development of the people. It has the most profound influence upon the whole texture of national life. The education of the the girl is the education of the mother and through her, of her children. Mr. Natranjan, Editor of the Indian Social Reformer has rightly said, 'Education is essentially a question of socical reform . . . . and in education I would give the first place to the education of girls. The education of a single girl means the uplifting of a whole family in a larger sense than the education of a single man.' The middle and high classes of the Indian people have long suffered from the dualism of an educated man and an ignorant woman. The ignorance and illiteracy of Indian women have given birth to innumerable social evils which have marred our domestic life and had their reaction on personal and national character.

It is of course true that the education of girls and women is progressing. But the rate of progress is awfully slow which can in no case meet our national needs. According to the Census reports (of 1921) while about 10 per cent of the boys and men in India can read and write, the literacy among women is just over 1 per cent. During the last few years the increase of pupils was 34 for every one thousand in the case of boys while in the case of girls it was only 11. In middle schools for boys the number of pupils is 18 times as great as in the corresponding schools for girls and in the High School stage it is 34 times as great.

The time has come when state and society should take active measures to further the education of girls, on which depends the moral and material progress of the country.

Obstacles in the way of women's education

CONSERVATISM.—The great disparity between the figures of boys and girls education is due as much to the lack of a general demand for it as to the lack of provision of facilities for the education of girls. By far the greatest number of school going girls is found in the primary classes bu their attendance in such classes is not always due to any real desire for education. They are sent to schools only because their parents cannot for some reason or the other look after them during the day. Such girls are removed from schools as soon as they are old enough to attend to domestic duties.

The truth is that the conservative attitude of parents has greatly hindered the progress of girls' education. Rai Hari Nath Ghosh expresses his opinion about this problem thus:— "People naturally want to educate their boys, well knowing that in future they will make them happy and comfortable in their old age and glorify their family, whilst the girls after marriage will be at the mercy of others." The authors of Calcutta University Commission Report quote the opinions of half a dozen men of eminence against the development of women's education. There are educated and enlightened

families who send their girls to schools because now-a-days an educated girl has better prospects in the marriage market than the illiterate girl and there are a few parents who educate their daughters for the sake of employment. Undoubtedly conservatism and prejudices are dying out but there are still large areas of orthodox population which have to be won over. It requires unflinching and steadfast social service by sincere workers whose hearts are burning for social uplift.

EARLY MARRIAGE.—One of the most formidable obstacles to the progress of girls' education is their early marriage. The census figures of the year 1921 show that in that year 2,230,000 girls were married under the age of ten and that 8½ million girls including 1¾ million muslim girls were married under the age of fifteen. 'The custom of early marriage' as Miss Eleanor MacDougal points out, discourages a father from spending money, which might be used as a dowry, on his daughters education, removes promising girls from school just at the age when their independent mental life is beginning, cuts off the supply of women teachers at the root (and) prevents the growth of a sense of vocation and professional enthusiasm in young women teachers.

The age of marriage is indeed slowly rising especially in the more educated circles and the Sarda Act will, if enforced in an effective manner in near future put this bad custom to a complete end.

There is neither in Hindu nor in Mohammadan religion any doctorine which preaches early marriage. A Muslim girl if married in early age, after attaining Puberty enjoys (according to Shariat) freedom enough to annul it if she so wills. To fight out this bad custom of early marriage is the task of religious and social reformers.

PURDAH SYSTEM:—The other great and serious obstacle in the way of girls' education is the purdah system. Girls of higher classes of Hindus and Muslims pass at an early age behind the purdah and spend the rest of their lives in the complete seclusion of their homes. This seclusion is more strict among the Muslims. As regards Muslims there is nothing like purdah in their religion. As a matter of fact it is an anti-Islamic custom which militates against the wide spread education of women. According to the verdict of Holy Quran a woman has almost equal social standing with man. She enjoys so much freedom that she can partake in all the activities of society with her face unveiled. Islam does not advocate the modern rigidity of purdah as some of the authors of Quinquennial Reports assume. Nor is there any religious law in Manu Smriti which awards a Hindu lady life-long imprisonment within the four walls of her house. Although there is arisen a recent anti-purdah movement both in Bengali Hindus as well as in Muslims of Northern India yet there is a great need for a strong agitation against this social evil. A crusade against this evil should be the task of young enthusiasts. The sooner this system be abolished the better it would be for the progress of girls' and women's education.

INEFFICIENCY OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF EDUCATION AND WESTERNIZATION:—The people of orthodox middle class are not satisfied with the present system of girls' education and their objections are justified to a great extent. Their first and the foremost objection is that an educated girl

does not like to perform domestic duties. She is changed into a "fashionable" young lady. The other objection of these parents is that school brings their daughters in contact with the riff-raff of the streets. The manners of their girls become very bad. Moreover a girl when associated with a girl whose parents are westernized and progressive may afterwards find the zennana surroundings irksome and restrictive. As a matter of fact modern education of western type implants in girls tastes which they would not have an opportunity to gratify in their after-life and thus sows the seeds of future discontent and discord.

MISSIONARY INFLUENCE :—The other objection of the parents is that girls who receive their education in missionary schools do not like to be married to an orthodox Hindu or a Muslim young man and often they do not hesitate in changing religion of their forefathers about which they are given unfortunately—but little information. Therefore many of the people of the middle classes do not like to send their girls to such institutions which may convert them to an alien religion.

CURRICULUM CRITICISED :—The curricula for girls largely follow those in use in schools for boys. It has been taken for granted that the instruction which is suitable for boys must necessarily be good for an Indian girl. But in my opinion curricula of studies for men and women should not be indentical with each other. However it also does not mean that a lower standard should be required of women than of men in any department of study. "In the formulation of curriculum of girls there are usually two aims. The first is to make the education of girls equal to that of boys in every respect so that they may be able to attain all the educational distinctions open to men. The second is to fit girls for the home and married life while giving them at the same time a liberal education." For the present the most practical suggestion is to introduce domestic science and home arts, *i.e.* preparation of foods, laundry work, dress-making, hygiene, sick nursing and care of children. They are exceedingly important and valuable subjects for school girls. But in colleges alternative subjects should be offered for women. For example child-psychology may be given as an alternative to logic and science. Music can be admitted as an optional subject. One of the aspects of women's education which distresses all is its bad effect upon their health and physique and therefore physical training should be included in the curriculum. One of the most important features of women's education is to satisfy the growing *needs*, of the Nation. India's as all of us know, is undergoing a severe economic depression. Training, in domestic science, therefore should not be regarded *as* important a factor in female education, (if the simplicity of Indian domestic life is to be preserved) *as vocational* training. Apart from the vocational education imparted in each and every girls' school there is a great need of establishing industrial centres for vocational instruction which should include carpet and tape weaving, spinning, basket making, lace making, and embroidery. This vocational training may be different in different localities and different circumstances. However many of the girls can earn in this way sufficient money to provide for their own education. But a more important thing is to create in them a sense of the "dignity of labour." Educationists therefore should not disregard the "bread and butter" aim of education for labouring classes which make up the bulk of Indian population.

CO-EDUCATION :—is not popular is India because the orthodox mentality of the Indian people would not tolerate free mingling of young girls with young boys. Hindus and Muslims are alike very particular in this respect. "Co-educators aim, in the first instance, at purifying and strengthening the bases of family life by teaching boys and girls *to know* one another, and at removing, through constant intercourse under natural conditions the occasions for unhealthy curiosity and premature sexual excitement. And they also count upon a general beneficial influence of the ideal of each sex upon the character of the other.

In Madras a recent conference of women officers agreed 'that Co-education was not objected to by the backward classes or by the educationally advanced people but there was a strong objection against it in the middle class.' The main difficulties in popularising co-education are :—

(1) There is a tendency in boys' schools for girls, (in the absence of women teachers) to be neglected.

(2) Accommodation in boys schools is not large enough for the girls as well as for the boys.

If separate provision is to be made for both boys and girls it would prove too costly. However it is refreshing to note that in spite of so much rigidity and conservatism on the part of the people, in Burma, Madras and Assam, co-education is fairly extensive and in the U. P. and Bihar it is progressing rapidly. It is hoped we will soon realise the importance of co-education and will break all fetters of social evils which are a hinderance in the way of co-education.

LACK OF WOMEN TEACHERS :—Women teachers are needed not only for the teaching of girls but for that of little boys since they are admittedly the best teachers for primary classes. In dealing with their own sex they can enter into more intimate and informal relations with their pupils and can advise, stimulate and inspire them in many ways not open to men. Moreover a school staffed by women will inspire greater confidence in the parents.

But under the present conditions of society it is extremely difficult to obtain and adequate supply of women teachers. Almost all training schools and colleges in India are missionary institutions and in them it is indeed difficult to provide facilities for purdahnashin students. Moreover training colleges are intended to train graduates and the number of Hindu and Mohammadan graduates is still very small. According to Hartog Committee Report out of 115 students (in training colleges) of British India 74 are Anglo-Indians and Europeans, 24 Indian Christians, only 15 Hindus and 2 Mohammadans. Apart from the dearth of women teachers another serious difficulty is that women teachers after being brought up and trained in towns cannot go and live alone in villages far from relations and friends. The author of, Quinquennial Review of E. Bengal writes, "owing to popular prejudices single women as a general rule, refuse to go to places where they are wanted. Such women however innocent and careful, are the victims of vilest intrigues and accusations. Until Indian men generally learn the rudiments of respect towards women who are not living in zennana, anything like a service of women teachers will be impossible." One of the main difficulties which prevents women teachers from accepting employment in rural areas where they are badly needed is the inadequacy of the pay offered. An independent woman

teacher needs satisfactory accommodation and has to provide a servant for herself. Men teachers can earn additional money by giving private tuition, can accept gifts in the form of goods and clothing but a woman teacher cannot do so. Hence it is necessary that the scales of pay should be revised and be made more adequate to a considerable extent. In this connection the state should render financial help to all women's institutions without any dicrimination. The present attitude of government towards the furtherence of the girls' education is highly unsatisfactory. Personally I believe Political changes must bring social changes and unless the present order of government gives place to new, no substantial progress of any *real* value can be made in social and educational spheres.

Some useful proposals

1. The first step in developing the education of purdahnashin and non-purdahnashin women both in rural and urban areas is "*to inspire a desire in them to be taught*." 'The beginning might be made' as Miss Cornelia Sorabji suggests 'by weekly talks to women either in the village school-room or in the yard of a town patashala.' In strictly orthodox zennanas the meetings for the study of Gita, meetings of milad and majlis can be turned into useful instruments of educational propaganda. But it requires selfless social workers.

2. HOME CLASSES.—In existing circumstances the mere establishment of schools will by no means be sufficient to bring about the spread of education among women. Public sentiments keep women and girls secluded in zenanas. Agencies for zennana teaching should therefore be established on a large scale. The system of imparting education by house to house visitation is of course a costly plan but it is the most useful device for giving secular instruction to purdahnashin ladies. I appeal to the Municipalities as well as the Government to organise, recognise and assist the system of home-classes which can be tested by a proper inspecting agency. But as Miss Sorabji suggests 'great care would need be taken about the teachers sent into zennanas. It seems to me that for zennana work you need women of the very highest culture and training and self-discipline for only they can understand a civilization not their own.' These women teachers may preferably be trained but they should be highly paid. This home-class education should be made compulsory. I hope the state will soon realize the importance of women's education and with a full regard to what would be the status of woman under the new constitution co-operate with private efforts in connection with girls' education. With Huxley 'I do not see how we are to make any permanent advance while one-half of the race is sunk and 99% of women are in the ship of ignorant superstitions.' 'Mr. P.C. Lal, Director of Siri Neketan says,' It is no exaggeration to say that the keynote to India's progress lies in the education of her women. The social evils caste distinctions, early-marriage and purdah system are in the way of progress. The complete ignorance of Indian women in regard to hygiene, maternity, care of Infants and birth control is another factor which is responsible for the high infant mortality!

All these evils of unsanitary living and religious superstitions are due to ignorance and the one and the only way to progress lies in the education of women and girls.

EACH IN HIS OWN TONGUE

A fire-mist and a planet,—
A crystal and a cell,—
A jelly-fish and a saurian,
And caves where the cave-men dwell;
Then a sense of law and beauty
And a face turned from the clod,—
Some call it Evolution,
And others call it God.

A haze on the far horizon,—
The infinite, tender sky,—
The ripe, rich tint of the cornfields,
And the wild geese sailing high;
And all over upland and lowland
The charm of the golden-rod,—
Some of us call it Autumn,
And others call it God.

Like tides on a crescent sea-beach
When the moon is new and thin,
Into our hearts high yearnings
Come welling and surging in:
Come from the mystic ocean,
Whose rim no foot has trod,—
Some of us call it Longing,
And others call it God.

A picket frozen on duty,
A mother starved for her brood,—
Socrates drinking the hemlock,
And Jesus on the rood;
And millions who, humble and nameless,
The straight, hard pathway trod,—
Some call it Consecration,
And others call it God.

William Herbert Carruth.

EDITOR'S NOTE

We would like to correct two small omissions in the last issue of Stri Dharma, *viz.*, October issue. The article "My visit to America and the Inernational Congress of Women" was by Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi; and the last paragraph of the article, "Copy of Dr. Reddi's speech to the Chicago Congress of Women" on page 625, was Editor's Note.

MY VISIT TO AMERICA—(THE CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF WOMEN

(*Concluded from previous issue*)—**II Part**

DR. (MRS.) MUTHULAKSHMI REDDI

My subject was 'creative citizenship' according to their pre-arranged programme, but the directors of the Congress and the programme secretary told me that I could speak on anything I liked about my country.

After I finished my speech the women came to me on the platform, everyone wishing to shake hands with me and to have my autograph in their book and to leave their cards with me. Some of them presented me with their pencils to show their appreciation. The women assembled at the Congress evinced such a genuine interest in our affairs that I could not help answering their many queries about India. It seemed to me that the majority of the Americans being freedom-loving people have real sympathy for India. They revere and respect our leaders. Whenever Gandhiji, Tagore, or Sarojini Naidu's name was mentioned there was a tremendous applause. Everyone enquired of Gandhiji, and his health after the 21 days' fast, and requested me to convey their love and respect to him. He as a patriot and as a lover of freedom is honoured by all the free nations.

I had the rare opportunity of meeting and conversing with men and women of many nationalities during my voyage in the American and German steamers. Every one of them who wished to speak to me never failed to enquire about Gandhiji and express a kind word about him. It has made me realise how widely and how universally he is known, and loved and respected. A Canadian Englishman and his wife who were with me on "Berengaria" when taking leave of me said," Gandhiji is a goodfellow, I am one of his admirers. Please give my love to him if ever you meet him."

Another German lady and her husband, a dentist, who were returning to Germany in the boat "Bremen" have written in my autograph book their opinion of Gandhiji.

The Americans were greatly interested in the Indian political situation and the events in India were better reported in the American papers than in the British.

But news seemed to be filtered out somewhere before leaving India. I wonder if such purposeful misrepresentation is one of the concomitants of the modern civilisation and modern scientific advance.

Now going back to my American tour, I had a talk with an eminent American lady at a tea-party in her house. She told me that she met Gandhiji for the first time in South Africa in the year 1911. As she wanted a letter of introduction from him to his friends in India, she wrote asking him to call on her in the English hotel where she was staying Gandhiji readily responded to her letter but being an Indian was debarred entrance into the European hotel. He had to return to his residence without meeting her and immediately sent a

letter through his European woman secretary explaining why he could not see her at the hotel. Then this American lady had to go to his place to meet him, where she had a long talk with him and found him even then an extraordinary individual. This good lady made very kind enquiries about Mrs. Cousins and about her imprisonment in the Indian jail.

MOTHER INDIA

Mother India has been widely read by the outside world. Every one of the Americans and the English who had never been to India asked me whether it was a true picture of the Indian life. They would politely begin with the question, "what do you think of the book, Mother India? Of course, we don't believe all what she has said, is there still child-marriage? etc."

In this connection I should like to acquaint our women with the name of Mrs. Grace Thompson Seton, Chairman of the Letters, who has taken special interest in the Indian Women's contributions to world thought and journalism. She has been collecting books and literature of women authors from all over the world for exhibition at the Congress. To my pleasant surprise, I found some of our women's magazines, the reports of the All-India Women's Conference, the All-Asian Women's Conference, Women's Indian Association magazines exhibited in the space set apart for India in the exhibition hall. To the number I added some of the publications and booklets that were with me then. I was sorry that I did not carry with me then the works of Sarojini Naidu, her poetical and prose works. Her name is well-known throughout the world and the American women simply admire and adore her. Whenever her name was mentioned there was a hearty cheer and loud applause. The American women have been watching with keen interest the women's movement in India. I discovered that I was well-known at least among the organisers of the conference and in the congress bulletin announcing the name of the delegates from each country with a brief note on their career. I found that not only was there a correct description of my public activities in India, but also I was honoured with the distinguished name of 'Jane Adam of India'—a great distinction indeed for my humble self. Jane Adam whom I had the pleasure of meeting and hearing at the Congress is one of the twelve women pioneers who had successfully fought for equal rights for women and who has distinguished herself in public services to her country. It was no small joy to find myself in a foreign country warmly welcomed, entertained, petted and honoured. It was women's genuine, spontaneous, and loving appreciation for the women's work, a tribute that woman paid to woman. Even though I discovered that spirit in the cultured and enlightened womanhood of every country and nation, the American women seem to possess it immensely and could not help giving expression to the same.

There were Souvenir publications with illustrative charts and photos about the women's work during the past century—"Woman throughout the Century; America's twelve great women leaders during the past century," and another valuable publication specially written for the presentation at the congress—"Angels and Amazons" on the history of the rise of women within the past century.

After one week's interesting and very busy session, the findings of the several discussions were reported by their respective chairmen to the full congress which drafted and passed the resolution based upon the results of those discussions.

THE AMERICAN WOMEN'S TRIBUTE TO THE INDIAN WOMEN'S WORK.

I was given a place of honour and distinction at every party and at every place. They were delighted to hear me talk English and wondered how well we could speak. The people were most polite, kind and hospitable. Very often I found young women running to me when walking along, to shake hands with me, to have my autograph and in turn to give their cards. They very much admired our coloured and bordered sarees and the way that we wear them and could not help expressing that the Indian women's dress was the most graceful in the whole world : so much so very often I wished that I could have taken with me a fashionable young Indian woman friend of mine as myself was not so very careful about my dress ond preferred to wear the common, the cheap an l the simple dress of my country. At the gate of the congress hall one day when I was talking to a group of delegates to the Congress, an American flower seller respectfully approached me and presented me with a beautiful bunch of red roses. When I was going to pay him for the flowers my friend Miss Ruthwood Small said that the flowerman had shown his appreciation of my English knowledge and asked me to go and thank him for the flowers.

I also noticed that the Americans were more artistic than the English. As very few,Indian women frequent America at any rate not so often and not so many as go to London, the American women love to see the oriental women. India is still to many in America a land of romance, mystery, and fabulous wealth.

I met many American sisters who had been to India and who had visited me at my residence, some of whom I could not even remember, but they of their own accord introduced themselves to me and offered to take me to places of interest in Chicago. I visited in their company the science hall of the Chicago Fair, the Science exhibits, the medical and surgical etc., of a century of progress and discovery, were most instructive and interesting. I had invitations both by wires and letters from Washington and other cities offering me free hospitality and arrangement of a wide lecturing tour in America. By the bye, I should like to mention that it was the national council of women in the United States that invited me and arranged for my free transport and hospitality in New York and in Chicago. I was invited to speak at the University of Chicago and at the International house. The Indians who attended the congress thanked me for my speech and very much pressed me to stay to deliver a few more lectures which they said, would be a great service to India.

I found that the Indians outside were more patriotic, very sensitive about the present political situation in India, and in fact those outside India feel much more than the Indians in India for the present *impasse*. But I must, in fairness, admit that none can compete with or even equal the American's

profuse hospitality, his cordiality and kindness, his most warm and ready welcome to well-known workers from India. I was much impressed with the social-hygiene exhibits and the round table discussions organised by Dr. Valeira Parker and with the book-stall and the writers' Conclave under the chairmanship of Mrs. Grace Thompson Seton and with the Round Table discussions on Disarmament, on security against crime, disease, and against prejudice under Miss Dingman and Miss Ruthwood Small. I could only attend a few sessions of the above, as in the first place it was difficult for me to decide which one I should specially attend, whether Writers' or Poetry Conclave, or social-hygiene discussions, or Disarmament or Minorities' question or the problems of the coloured races. All were of equal importance and interest to me as America has made a great advance in every sphere of useful human activity. I wished that I was allowed to spend more weeks in Chicago itself, but three cables from my colleagues in London necessitated my taking leave of my friends in Chicago. Before leaving I had the joy of meeting Mr. Natarajan and his daughter, my old friends, who arrived at Chicago only that morning. That evening I had the pleasure of dining with them, with Mr. Das Gupta and other Indian friends in Chicago who all came to the station to see me off to New York.

MADRAS WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Eighth Session

MISS McDOUGALL'S ADDRESS

The eighth session of the Madras Constituent Conference of the All-India Women's Conference on educational and social reform was held at the Museum Theatre, Egmore, Dr. Miss McDougall presiding. There was a large gathering of ladies. The proceedings commenced with prayers.

Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi, in proposing Miss D. McDougall to the chair, said their President had rendered yeoman service to the cause of women's education and that she was truly fitted to preside over their conference. Service irrespective of caste and colour, was the only test to be applied by them for posts of responsibility and honour and judged by that standard Miss McDougall was the right person to preside over their conference.

Mrs. Kuriyan seconded the motion, which was carried with acclamation.

Miss McDougall, in the course of her address, spoke as follows :—

"First of all, a warm welcome to all who have assembled here this morning for a day of conference on matters of vast importance, not only to women, but to all who claim India as the land of their choice and adoption. This conference of ours is one of many which are being held in many parts of India in preparation for the All-India Conference which will be held in Calcutta at the end of the year. This is the eighth year of our meeting, and seems likely to be the most important session that has been held since, in 1925 the idea was first launched. The plan of the All-India Conference and its preliminary Constituent Conferences, we owe to our dear friend, Mrs. Cousins whom we hope very soon to see among us again. This year which has been in many ways one of prosperity and progress and harmony among ourselves has also been marked by our regret at her absence. The close of this year has been marked also by the departure from our sight of one whose name must be in the thoughts of all who come here to-day. Two years ago when the All-India Conference met in this very hall in December, we were all invited to Adyar to share the kindly hospitality of Mrs. Annie Besant. From the first inception of these conferences she was active and generous in her help and approval. But when the guests came together she was not strong enough to speak to them, and after twenty months of increasing physical weakness she has passed away, leaving a memory which will be an inspiration to many. Large heart and brain, gifted beyond any woman of our time in eloquence and mental energy, she devoted with generous enthusiasm the great powers of her nature to the service of the land of her choice, and before her departure had the joy of seeing the dawning of a new day.

Photo taken at a Public Meeting held at Pantheon Gardens, Egmore, Madras, to welcome Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddi on her return from America and London.

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MESSAGE TO MEN

Our business to-day is to consider the resolutions which we are asked to send up to the All-India Conference for their deliberations in December. We think of the company which will meet there in Calcutta day after day, women from every part of India, speaking all her languages, and representing all the elements that make up the rich whole of Indian womanhood; the experienced and well-tried leaders, the pioneers from communities which have only just begun to realise themselves, women of all the religions of India, of every social level, of all ages from the ardent girl student to the aged people who remember a time when the facts of the present day seemed fantastic dreams. In a lesser degree, our conference here to-day is composed of such elements also, and the greatest thing perhaps that has been accomplished by the organisation of the conference is the bringing together of women of such different sorts to enrich each other by sharing their knowledge and experience. It would be difficult to exaggerate the gains which we have won through this new fellowship and friendship with one another. It is the great happiness and also the great glory of the women's movement in India, that it has always been free from narrow communalism, pride and prejudice which are so great an obstacle in the way of India reaching her goal, of responsible nationhood. Women have entered the field of Indian politics with this message, "We are all one; let there be no division between us." Let us trust that Indian manhood always responsive to the voice of the mother will accept this message, and that the presence and growing influence of women in the public life of the country will always make for peace, dignity and mutual good will. Yet there is no slumberous unanimity among us, no blind following of any one leader or authority. There is unanimous agreement indeed as to our hopes and aims and ideals, but there is abundant diversity of opinion as to method and detail, and no one who has heard the vigorous discussions carried on in smaller gatherings and meetings, though such are not possible in such a large gathering and in so short a time as the conference of to-day, can accuse our movement of torpor or apathy.

A YEAR OF PROGRESS

A new feature in the proceedings of to-day is the inclusion in our programme of some reports or accounts of things that are actually being done in this city to work the reforms which in past years we have been advocating. At first, our resolutions generally took the form of appealing to Government to remove certain evils and promote certain reforms; Two years ago we began to call on the general public as well as on the Government to carry out the things that must be done, realising how ineffective a good law may be unless the public opinion is actively supporting it. Now, we shall be hearing, for our inspiration and encouragement, of work that is in process and of improvement that may be visibly seen.

The year has been one in which anxiety and disappointment have not been wanting. The widespread poverty and misery caused by extensive unemployment have affected us deeply. Also members of our conference have called attention to new evils arising from the rapid spread or gambling, and we have disheartening evidence of frequent failure to make

the compulsory education for girls and boys an actual thing in areas of the city where it is in operation, and of many cases of disobedience to law against child-marriage. Yet on the whole the year has been one of encouraging progress, and we in Madras have many reasons to look back with some satisfaction to what has been done. We are all proud of the part taken by our late President, Dr. (Mrs.) Muthulakshmi Reddy, before the Joint Select Committee in London this summer. We have her inspiring presence with us again and one of the great things we look forward to in this meeting is her message on the principle of non-communal electorates.

We have had among us, though unfortunately not at a time when she could have spoken to the conference, the Principal of the new College for Home Science at Delhi, an enterprise which is of importance to the whole of India. We hope that from it may come inspiration and direction for the reform of the education of women and girls and also that it will prove to be a link of union between North and South India.

THE TASK BEFORE US

Progress has been made also in the gigantic task of combating the deep-rooted and obstinate evils such as the oppression of the outcaste classes, the evils of intemperance and the injustice still present in some of the laws concerning marriage property and inheritance: we are to consider these things in our conference and also to hear of more positive lines of progress such as the increase of home industries, the new emphasis placed on the physical improvement of the children at school; the attention now given by the university to music and domestic science, better provision for the protection of animals, and activity in dealing with the problems of social vice and of begging. Women, sometimes alone and sometimes in valuable co-operation with men reformers, have done much useful work in all these fields this year. We will now turn to the actual work of the conference with the prayer that the divine blessing and inspiration without which, our work must be futile and feeble, may be abundantly granted to us all.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION ON DR. ANNIE BESANT'S DEMISE:

I. "The Madras Constituent Women's Conference places on record its grateful appreciation of the glorious service that has been rendered to the whole world and particularly to India and to India's womanhood by late Dr. Annie Besant, and expresses its feeling of profound sorrow and the irreparable loss to the country by her demise."

RESOLUTIONS ON EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL REFORMS

II. HOME SCIENCE COLLEGE.—This Conference reviews with great joy and satisfaction the opening of the Lady Irwin College for Home Science at Delhi and regards this as the most important step forward in the educational progress of the whole of India.

This Conference calls upon the women of India to give their whole-hearted support and to assist this college in every way, viz.

(*a*) by giving wide publicity to the aims and objects of the college

(*b*) by sending students to it

(*c*) by influencing educational bodies to secure posts for the graduates from this college, and

(*d*) by providing adequate endowment funds for the College, so as to develop the research department of the college.

III. ELEMENTARY AND MASS EDUCATION.

This Conference urges upon the Government the great need of Education for the Masses and strongly recommends the enforcement and the immediate introduction of compulsory Elementary Education for both boys and girls, as well as the creation of greater facilities for adult education.

IV. FRANCHISE—(*a*) This Conference supports the Memorandum II of the All-India Women's Conference.

(*b*) This Conference unanimously demands a non-communal electorate and the maximum voting strength for Women.

(*c*) "This Conference strongly recommends that a training for efficient citizenship should be instituted as a course of studies in all educational institutions.

Section (a) of this resolution was passed by a majority of 40 Votes to 3.

V. GAMBLING (*a*) This Conference whole-heartedly condemns gambling of any type and on any scale, public or private."

Cinema—(*b*) This Conference calls upon the authorities to appoint on the Board of Censors a sufficient number of members with expert knowledge of child psychology, to avoid the increasing number of those cinema shows which are injurious to the mental and moral development of the youth of the country.

VI. CHILD PROTECTION—(*a*) Whereas in Madras City little boys of 5 years old and upwards are engaged in Beedi Factories under deplorable conditions in small, dirty, over-crowded and unventilated rooms for about 12 or 13 hours a day, for which they receive about 1 or 2 annas, this Conference calls upon the Government immediately to pass a bill forbidding the employment of children under 12 years of age in these factories.

(*b*) This Conference calls upon the Government to amend the Madras Children's Act of 1920 Section 29 Clause I. A. & D. by adding the words "Cruelty" and "Immorality" respectively as a cause for depriving the parent or guardian of the custody of the Child.

VII. SOCIAL DISABILITIES—(*a*) This Conference reiterates its former resolutions appealing to all concerned to remove the social disabilties of the so-called Depressed Classes.

(*b*) This Conference rejoices that Gandhiji has resolved to devote his time and energy to the removal of the curse of untouchability and calls upon the women of the country actively to co-operate with him in this campaign.

(*c*) This Conference whole-heartedly gives it support to the Temple Entry Bill now before the Legislative Assembly.

VIII. (*a*) MARRIAGE—*The Sarda Act*—This Conference thanks the Government for having supported the Sarda Act and appeals to the members of the Assembly and Government to amend this Act so as to prevent and penalise Child Marriage.

(*b*) *Equality*—This Conference reiterates its former resolutions urging reform of the Marriage Laws so as to bring about Equality in marital relationships in the Hindu Community and hence supports Sir Hari Singh Gour's Bill now before the Assembly.

IX. INHERITANCE RIGHTS FOR WOMEN—This Conference urges upon the Government to pass immediate legislation giving adequate Rights of Inheritance to women.

X. INDIGENOUS INDUSTRIES—This Conference reiterates its former resolution that while placing on record its appreciation of the work already done, it calls for increased effort in the support of indigenous industries (Swadeshi) such as hand-spinning, weaving, and all other cottage industries.

XI. PHYSICAL CULTURE—(*a*) This Conference reiterates before the public the vital necessity for public parks and playgrounds for children in the city.

(*b*) This conference gives its whole-hearted support to all schemes for the extension of physical education in all the schools and Colleges of this Presidency.

XII. TEMPERANCE—*Issuing license to intoxicating drugs*—This Conference totally condemns the practice of issuing license to the vendors dealing in intoxicating drugs and urges upon the Government and the public to support prohibition.

XIII. (*a*) This Conference thanks the University of Madras for appointing women Specialists to deliver extension lectures in Domestic Science and in Indian Music.

(*b*) This Conference congratulates the Government on the institution of a special court to prevent Cruelty to Animals.

XIV. (*a*) This Conference urges upon the public the great need for a Home for women and girls in moral danger.

(*b*) This Conference urges upon the Government for the passing of immediate legislation to check public begging.

XV. This Conference empowers the General Committee to appoint a Sub-Committee to enquire into the question of Birth control and to report its findings as soon as possible.

XVI. Reports on

(*a*) The suppression of immoral traffic in Women.

(*b*) Work among the destitutes and delinquent children.

(*c*) Harijan Seva Sangha.

(*d*) Leper Relief Work.

(*e*) Slum Improvement Work in the City.

This Conference of Women pays its respectful and grateful homage to Raja Rammohan Roy, during his centenary celebration for his inestimable service to humanity, to his country, and to the cause of Indian womanhood in particular and appeals to the public to subscribe liberally towards his memorial.

At the beginning of the Conference a resolution welcoming Mrs. Cousins was also passed from the chair.

THE TRUE OBJECT OF RELIGION IS THE PROMOTION OF A SPIRIT OF HUMILITY, TOLERANCE, BROTHERHOOD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

The progressive advancement of modern civilization and the spread of present-day education to a certain extent have made most of us bold enough to deny the existence of God and to lead a life that aims at hunting after wealth and worldly pleasures. "Is not life more than bread, and the body more than clothing? Surely, "Man cannot live by bread alone." The sole aim and object of life for most of us has been to accumulate wealth by fair or foul means. It has been said by a great man that the real pleasures we enjoy are those which are not procurable for money!

In the eyes of most of us belief in God has come to be an "old fashioned thing" a sign of imbecility and perversity; and no wonder that rank materialism has become the order of the day.

Yet there is a different class of people in our midst who profess to be the followers of the "true religion." Their religion denies equality to all men, and the equal privileges of a common humanity. They pride themselves upon their caste, abhor others belonging to a "lower caste" and detest the followers of other faiths. And there are others who assert that they are the "chosen people" to whom God manifests himself, and whose welfare is His main concern. Evidently they ignore the fact that there can be no such thing as "monopoly in religion." Is there any arrogance so insufferable as the arrogance of religion, and any intolerance so uncompromising as the intolerance of religion.

The true object of religion is the promotion of a spirit of humility, tolerance, brotherhood, and righteousness. It aims at making men gentle and considerate towards others, even those belonging to other faiths, and there is only One Lord and Master, One Creator, who is benevolent and compassionate to all. However much one may be regular in his hours of worship, however much one may spend in charity, he has missed the true meaning of religion, who does not realise the unity underlying all things. The Sun and the Moon, the rains and the rivers, do not make any discrimination for caste or colour, age or sex, rank or position. Let us take some common factors of a few Great Religions :—

1. BUDDHISM.—"Let one cultivate goodwill towards all the world—a mind illimitable, unobstructed, without hatred, without enmity. This mode of living is the supreme good." —*Sutt-Nipata*, 150-151

2. CHRISTIANITY.—"Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God." —*Matthew*, 5-9

3. HINDUISM.—"To you, I declare this holy mystery. There is nothing nobler than humanity." —*Mahabharata*, 12, 300-20

4. ISLAM.—"To God belong the East and the West. Therefore, where-ever ye turn, is the face of God. Verily, God is all-pervading, all knowing." —*Koran*, 2-109.

5. JAINISM.—"Establish the religion of the law which benefits all living beings in the whole universe. It will bring supreme benefit to all living beings in all the world." —*Kalpa Sutra*, 111.

6. SIKHISM.—"Churches, teachers, teachings half-a-dozen! The teacher of teachers is one; His forms, many. The sun is one, the seasons many. Innumerable are the manifestations of the Creator." —*Adi Granth, Sohila* 2-1-2.

Having grasped the true meaning of religion, naturally a desire—nay, an irresistible desire to realise God and to do His will arises. Curiously enough, orthodoxy has taken such a strong root in the minds of many of us, and has taught us to visualize God as existing in some Heaven, far away from our earthly conditions. But it is a happy sign of the times that such a false notion has been gradually losing hold of our minds, and we are commencing to realise the Divine Presence in many ways in our every-day lives. If God is everywhere, it naturally follows that all service is service to God, and He is to be served wherever He manifests Himself—whether in man, woman or child, or in animals. The best and the only way of quenching our thirst of pleasing God is to serve His Creatures—our fellow-beings. A true lover of God cannot and will not brook to see his brothers and sisters around him in misery and darkness. He will do all that he can to alleviate their misery. To him Social Service is Religion.

Thus it will be seen that Social Service has the highest characteristic of religion in that in addition to making the worker see his relation, as a unity, to the animal world, it also forms a connecting link between the poor and the rich, between the high and the low. It is the firm conviction of the writer that, if our religions are interpreted correctly and acted up to, many of the present-day social ills and the quarrels and divisions among mankind will be the things of the past and that India can soon regain her past glory. Let Truth be told, God be praised, and love be the guiding factor in all human activities.

H. SHRINIVAS.

"AVE MARIA"

(A LEGEND OF OLD BRITTANY)

RETOLD BY MARY B. DAIN

Not far from the town of Landerneau, in the gently rolling country of Finistere, may be seen an ancient church. Ivy grows unhindered over the nooks and crannies of its time-worn stones. Giant poplars stretch their heads towards its tall spires, and its bells still call the faithful to worship.

Within a stones throw of the church stands a chateau, now the vicarage. It was built in the time of Anne of Brittany and used by her as a summer home. At her death she willed that it become the presbytery of the church

Beyond its wide domain lie stretches of purple heather and fields of golden grain, vanishing eastward in rising green hills and the more distant Mont d'Arree. And westward to the sea flow the peaceful waters of the river Elorn.

At the time of the death of Queen Anne the Cure of the Church of Landerneau was the beloved Abbe Ambroise. Not only was he beloved in the village of Landerneau, but in all the surrounding country, for in his church was held annually one of the famous pardons of Brittany. Pilgrims came from near and far, some on horseback, some in carriages, and many foot-sore devotees; all seeking pardon and a blessing from the Cure of Landerneau.

On a stained glass window of this ancient church may be read the story of the good Abbe Ambroise and one of his little flock, called Yann Salancin.

Yann was a poor peasant lad, weak of intellect, but gentle and harmless. None in the village knew his parentage, nor whence he came. Perhaps he had been one of the yearly pilgrims and had strayed away from his companions. No one took the trouble to inquire and Yann could not tell. The only words he was ever known to speak intelligently were "Ave Maria." He wandered in the fields and forests, swinging from the branches of trees, or gathering wild flowers, always singing his "Ave Maria." Perchance his mother had crooned the words at his cradle, or it might be the music of some village choir had found expression at his lips.

He begged his food from door to door. Although the gardens were rich in fruit trees, plum and cherry, mulberry and apple, Yann took nothing that was not offered to him. On summer nights he slept beside the hay in the fields. In winter he sought a warmer shelter in the country barns. He might often be seen lying on the soft carpeted earth under the trees, silently gazing at the green and blue checkered canopy above him. None knew his thoughts and he could not give them words if he would. But he did have a language he shared with the little creatures of the field and forest.

The birds would come to eat from his hand, and the squirrels fed from the pockets of his ragged jacket, where he managed to keep a store of crumbs from his scant supply of food, or of grain gathered in field or barn.

Every morning, his arms filled with flowers, Yann would pass the Cure's study window, on his way to the vicarage kitchen, where old Josephine, the housekeeper, gave him his daily breakfast of milk with thick bread and butter. In response to Cure's "Good morning, Yann," the boy's face would light up for a moment with a passing gleam of intelligence. He would smile and answer with an "Ave Maria," and offer the Cure a spray of lilac, or a lily, or perchance field daisies or sweet-scented clover. He had some to spare too for Josephine, who treated him as one of God's afflicted children, and not as a begger. But his flowers were intended for the church nearby. It was Yann who kept the statue of the Virgin, beside the altar, supplied with fresh bloom. He spent several hours daily in devotion at the foot of the statue, decorating it with his offering of flowers. The lily was his favorite. In its season, he would wander along the streams where lilies grew in abundance. Then the Virgin would be buried in a bower of fragrant white.

The Cure loved his garden; in summer bright with flowers, the fruit ripening on the trees, and in full the grapes hanging in purple clusters on the garden wall. Often, when mounted on a ladder, pruning his fruit trees, or trimming his vines, he would see Yann skipping along the bank of the stream that skirted the southern side of the chateau walls. His arms filled with his treasures Yann would sing his "Ave Maria, unconscious of any listeners but the birds. And helpless Yann was very near to the good Cure's heart.

Then, one day, by whom no one knew, a whisper was started in the village that an evil spirit had possession of Yann. The children who loved him, and had often danced with him over the meadows, were warned that this evil one might carry them off. Then, as children will they saw with the eyes of their elders, and began to fear Yann. How could the poor clouded mind understand? The beasts of the field and the birds of the air came at his building. None of God's creatures had ever feared him. And the little children had loved him. They had sung with him and gathered flowers with him in spring time and summer. Then Yann, of the innocent soul and hungry heart, grew afraid.

A morning came when he failed to pass the Cure's window. Josephine looked for him in vain. There were no fresh flowers for the Virgin. The lilies at Her feet drooped and faded. Several days passed and he did not come. Then the Cure went in search of Yann.

He went from door to door, but not as poor Yann, in quest of food. He sought news of the missing boy. The older ones feared

to tell him, and professed ignorance. At last, from the children, he learned that helpless Yann had been driven from the village.

The Cure's heart was filled with foreboding. Had this stricken lamb only strayed from the flock or had disaster overtaken him? With two stout peasants he took the forest path, where Yann had been known to wander. After several hours search they found him in a distant wood, dead from hunger.

Abbe Ambroise was indignant with grief and anger. He had the body carried back to the presbytery, then called his people together.

"What cruelty is this you have committed?" he cried in righteous indignation; "You, with children of your own, who profess to believe in a crucified Saviour—you have crucified one of God's little ones. You have committed a grevious sin against one whose short life was but a song of praise. Have you forgotten Him who said "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these ye did it unto me?"

They buried Yann's body near the church that he had served so well; where he had given his life's brief message in the only way he knew, with flowers.

One morning but a few weeks after the burial, the Cure walked as usual toward the sanctuary, for his daily devotions. He turned aside to pass the secluded corner given to Yann's grave. He walked slowly, musing on the short life of the mute boy, seemingly so futile, so incomplete; and yet it had been an influence for good. This morning, as well as on others, Josephine had preceded him to the church, with flowers for the Virgin, cut from the vicarage garden. Thus she tried to carry on the devoted service of Yann. One by one the penitents had come, from the village and the farms. They were poor, but each had his or her mite to offer, for a memorial to the dead boy. "Might not a church window, be a permanent reminder."

Then he stood still, in surprise and wonder. Surely that was a white lily spreading it waxen petals at the head of the grave. He went nearer, fearing his old eyes had deceived him. He felt sure it had not been there when he last looked at Yann's resting place. But, yes! It was a lily in full bloom. And the lily season was passed. How could it be.

He called to Josephine, just then leaving the church; "Come, see the sign the Lord has sent! He has spoken to remind us that every soul is precious in His sight." Josephine too looked in wonder. She leaned nearer, her look changing to one of awe and devotion. "Oh, Monsieur le Cure," she cried excitedly, "It is a miracle, it is a miracle—See!" pointing to the petals of the lily. And on them could be seen traced in delicate lines, the world: "Ave Maria."

WOMEN THE WORLD OVER

EIGHTH VICTORIOUS WOMAN CHANNEL SWIMMER

For the first time since 1930 the English Channel has been conquered. Among the many unsuccessful attempts made in the interim were two by Miss Sunny Lowry, last triumphant victor. Miss Lowry entered the water at Cape Grisnez, France, at 6-30 p.m. on Monday, August 28th and reached St. Margaret's Bay, Kent, at 10-15 a.m. on Tuesday, her time being 15 hours 45 minutes, 1 hour and 11 minutes longer than the record of 14 hours 34 minutes, set up by the American swimmer, Miss Gertrude Ederle.

WOMAN STOCK AND SHARE BROKER

Our member, Miss Edith Midgley, whom the Bradford Stock Exchange so churlishly refused to admit, has now started her own business as an outside broker, at Britannia House, Leeds Road, Bradford.

ENTERPRISING YOUNG GIRL POULTRY FARMER

Mary Sadler, aged seventeen, of Wood End, Kenton, Newcastle, is sole owner of a farm of two acres, with seven-hundred head of poultry. A consistent prize winner at local shows, Mary began her enterprise at the age of fourteen, when her father gave her one hundred chicks. As her profits increase Mary continues to develop her business.

WELSH WOMEN'S DIVING CHAMPIONSHIP

Miss F. Griffiths won the Welsh women's diving championship at Barry, with ninety points.

WOMAN HEAD OF MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Marcia C. Noyes, of Baltimore, is the first woman president of the American Medical Library Association. She has served as Executive Secretary of the Faculty and co-editor of the bulletin of the Library Association.

ONLY WOMAN HOLDER OF FRENCH LEGION OF HONOUR

Fanniele Lardier, the only woman on whom the French Legiòn of Honour has been bestowed, and the only woman member of the Fedèration des Ancien Combatants, is visiting America with two hundred and fifty other French veterans, to make a return call on the American Legion members who visited France in 1927.

The Chief Nurse of the A. D. C. (French Red Cross), Mlle, le Lardier, has three citations for bravery on her War Cross.

WOMEN OFFICIALS TO STARVE?

According to Reuter, the Bulgarian Minister of Education, has announced that all women employed in his Ministry will be dismissed on October 1. Their places will be taken by unemployed male teachers who have families to support. On the same date many women teachers employed by the State will be dismissed and replaced by men.

A WOMAN DOCTOR OF OCEANORGAPHY

"Saturday Night" a weekly journal issued in Toronto, reports that the University Women's club of Toronto gave a dinner recently in honour of Miss Viola May Davidson, who received the degree of Ph.D. from the University of Toronto. The occasion was of special interest, not only owing to the fact that Miss Davidson's chosen field of study, oceanography, is one which has attracted a comparatively small number of women, but that she has carried on the research leading to her degree while engaged in her regular work as a teacher on the staff of the Toronto Secondary Schools. During the school year, she teaches biology in the Central High School of Commerce, while her vacations have been spent at the Atlantic Biological Station in St. Andrews, Scotland, at the Marine Biological Station in Plymouth, England, and at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Cape Cod.

QUEEN WILHELMINA

The Dutch people celebrated the thirty-fifth, anniversary of the accession of Queen Wilhelmina, the only ruling Queen in Europe. Actually, she became Queen forty-three years ago on the death of her father, though her mother was Queen Regent until her daughter's eighteenth birthday. The people are naturally proud of their Queen. Under her reign the country has known increasing prosperity, and has been kept out of a devastating War. At a time, too, when other countries in Central Europe have been involved in political upheavals, Holland has enjoyed and continues to enjoy ordered progress and the development of liberal institutions.

There was a big demonstration of Dutch youth associations at the Stadium in Amsterdam. Delegates from all the youth organisations, numbering 30,000 marched past the Royal Family, including the Dowager Queen. A choir of 1,000, voices sang the Coronation Song of 1898.

The Queen thanked all present for the tribute, and laid emphasis on the need of national unity in the present difficult time. The Dutch people, she said, wished to remain alone, and to live on the foundations and traditions laid by their forefathers. "We should look to our ancestors for guidance in our present difficulties." She praised the Dutch youth associations for their zeal in preparing the celebration. They had a great future before them if they continued on the path indicated.

MINISTER FOR LABOUR CAUTIOUS

According to Miss Frances Perkins, Minister for Labour in the Roosevelt Cabinet, about 750,000 men and women regained jobs last month, making nearly 2,200,000 re-employed since last March.

But Miss Perkins is cautious. She adds, "the depression is still a fact to be reckoned with, and it is much too soon to throw our hats in the air and cheer over a victory which, as yet, is far from complete."

The increased employment was only partly due to the National Recovery campaign. Operations under the first code adopted did not begin until July 15th, and the present figures include only the month ending August 15th.

BRANCH REPORTS

MADANAPALLE WOMEN'S INDIAN ASSOCIATION

6th October, 1933.

A meeting of the Madanapalle branch of the Women's Indian Association was held yesterday in Sri Krishna Vidyalaya when Sreemati Amruta Valli Ammal wife of Mr. R. Krishna Sastri M.A., B.L., Advocate presided.

Mr. R. Seshagiri Rao one of the helpers of the branch narrated the life and the life-work of Dr. Annie Besant to the world in general and India in particular in different spheres of activity and her characteristics as a versatile genius and said that she represented fullness in some degree on this globe, like God in the unmanifested regions in all His splendour and fullness.

After Srimathi Papamma spoke, the following resolution was put from the chair and passed unanimously:—

"The members of the Madanapalle Women's Indian Association at a special meeting held on 5th October 1933, place on record the great loss India has sustained in the passing away of Dr. Besant who for over 40 years worked for the uplift of India in general and Indian women in particular and express the hope that her noble example would inspire the women of India to follow in her footsteps."

Coonoor Women's Tribute to Dr. Besant

A meeting of the W. I. A. was held at the Cosmopolitan Club, Coonoor on the 7th inst. presided over by Mrs. P. Krishna Menon to express their profound sorrow at the sad demise of Dr. Besant.

Mrs. Menon said that Dr. Besant was the best friend that Indian men and women ever had. Her magnetic force, untiring efforts, great sympathy with Indian aspirations have endeared her to all the people of India alike. It was chiefly through her efforts that the women of India got franchise and awoke to a sense of their responsibilities in the national life of the Country. Her oratorical powers were simply marvellous. It thrilled the audience and held them spell bound. She was a great educationist. In short we have lost in her a wonderful personality, an affectionate mother, a great social reformer and a sincere friend to the poor and needy. Indians are deeply indebted to her and every one should join hands to commemorate her memory.

Mrs. Bhat after seconding what Mrs. Menon spoke said that Mrs. Besant was a really remarkable woman. Born as an English

woman she had adopted India as her home. She was always a friend of the poor and downtrodden.

After a few remarks from the chair the meeting came to a close.

R. A. NATHAN,
Secretary, W. I. A., Coonoor.

MESSAGE FROM DR. (MRS.) MUTHULAKSHMI REDDI, TO THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE.

5th October, 1933.

To

Dame Adelaide Livingstone, Director of Meeting,
The International Consultative Group for Disarmament,
25, Quai du Mont Blanc, Geneva.

Ref :—your letter dated 14th September, 1933.

DEAR SISTER,

We in India readily welcome and heartily support all efforts to stop war and to promote peace, good-will and love among nations and races. India has always been the victim of external aggression, invasions and exploitation because the religion and philosophy of the majority population namely the Hindus advocate 'Ahimsa or non-violence' as the highest Dharma and 'Non-possession' or 'renunciation' as an essential virtue to be practised for the attainment of 'Mukti' or the 'realisation of God'—As the outside world has been inclined otherwise, India has suffered much in the past and is still suffering from others' greed and selfishness.

We are disarmed and we are unable even to defend ourselves against our aggressors and enemies so much so that some of our young nationalists doubting the efficacy of 'Non-violence' have taken to terrorism, to violence, secret bomb-making and bomb throwing at the high officials, especially at the police, at the magistrates, the executive officers of repressive ordinances and laws. Such a terrorist movement has a tendency to spread in India under the present British policy.

Hence it is a great comfort and consolation for us that the good people of the world have realised the benefits that the world would derive by a policy of non-violence and of 'live and let others live.'

Therefore it gives us a great joy to send you our message—welcome a new world order—of non-war and non-violence and when men will respect each others' rights to live and enjoy when might will give way to right and justice, and when the world brotherhood founded upon the divine in man will become a reality.

Yours very truly,

DR. (MRS.) MUTHULAKSHMI REDDY.

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Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Parnakuti, Poona

It has undoubtedly much valuable information for the medical practitioners All those who are in charge of birth control clinics, maternity and Child welfare centres will find the book very helpful indeed.

Dr. Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi, Madras

I am glad to tell you that your book contains some original idea and practical suggestions, which I have not come across in other books It is the result of real practical research and intelligent study. I cherish this book as a valuable addition to my library.

Dr. Mrs. Anna Thomas, Karachi

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HINDI

पंडिता रमाबाई ।

पण्डिता रमाबाई का जन्म दक्षिण के एक ब्राह्मण कुल में हुआ था। उनके पिता ने उन्हें संस्कृत-ग्रंथों का अध्ययन करने में बड़ी सहायता दी। प्रायः सभी प्राचीन भारतीय ग्रंथों का मनन उन्होंने धैर्य पूर्वक किया। अपने पिता के साथ उन्होंने देश के प्रायः सभी तीर्थस्थानों में भ्रमण किया, बड़े-बड़े पण्डितों से वाद-विवाद करके उन्हें अपने प्रगाढ पाण्डित्य से चकित कर दिया। तीर्थों के पाखण्ड, दुराचार आदि का प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव प्राप्त करके उन्होंने स्थान स्थान में उसके विरुद्ध प्रचार करना प्रारंभ कर दिया। उनका ज्ञान इतना अधिक था, उनकी स्मृति-शक्ति ऐसी प्रबल थी कि पौराणिक ग्रंथों के प्रायः २०,००० श्लोक उन्हें कण्ठस्थ थे। पण्डितों से वादविवाद करने में वह अकसर स्वरचित श्लोकों का उपयोग करती थीं।

कलकत्ते में आकर उन्होंने ब्रह्मसमाज के तात्कालिक नेताओं का परिचय प्राप्त किया। इन नेताओं में स्व० केशवसेनचन्द्रजी का नाम उल्लेखनीय है। केशवचन्द्र ने उनके विचारों का पूर्णतया समर्थन किया। रमाबाई के सामाजिक तथा धार्मिक सुधार संबन्धी क्रान्तिकारी विचारों का समर्थन उस समय देश के कुछ इने गिने विद्वानों ने ही किया। अधिकांश जनता कट्टर पन्थियों के पक्ष में थी और पण्डिता रमाबाई के विचारों का घोर विरोध करने पर तुली हुई थी। कट्टरवादी पण्डित जब तर्कद्वारा उन्हें न जीत सकते तो अत्यन्त घृणित शब्दों में उनका अपमान तथा तिरस्कार करने लग जाते।

माता-पिता की मृत्यु होने पर रमाबाई पारिवारिक बन्धन से एक दम मुक्त हो गईं। धर्मशास्त्रों में विवाह की जो आयु निर्धारित है, उसे वह कभी पार कर चुकी थीं, तथापि अभी तक इन्होंने विवाह नहीं किया था। इसके अतिरिक्त प्रचलित धार्मिक मतों का खण्डन करने में लगी थीं। इन सब कारणों से कोई भी ब्राह्मण परिवार उनके साथ वैवाहिक संबन्ध स्थापित करने के लिये राजी नहीं हो सकता था, और उनकी

इच्छा भी ब्राह्मण वंश में विवाह करने की नहीं थी। उन्होंने स्वेच्छा से एक शूद्रवंशी पुरुष के साथ विवाह कर लिया। पर कुछ ही समय बाद उनके पति की मृत्यु हो गयी। इस विवाह से समाज उनके और भी विरुद्ध हो गया था। पर वह भी उसके साथ अंत तक युद्ध करने के लिये तुली हुई थीं।

कुछ समय बाद लोकमान्य तिलक और माननीय रानडे से उनका परिचय हो गया। दोनों ने उन्हें उनके कार्य तथा विचारों के लिये विशेष उत्साह प्रदान किया। रानडे महोदय के सहयोग से उन्होंने 'आर्य-महिला-समाज' नामक एक संस्था स्थापित की। इस संस्था का उद्देश्य बाल्य-विवाह का विरोध करने तथा शिक्षा द्वारा महिलाओं की सामाजिक सत्ता को उन्नत बनाने का था। प्रति सप्ताह उक्त महिला-समाज में उनका व्याख्यान होता था। उनका कहना था कि यदि भारतीय महिलायें जागरण के पथ पर न आ सकीं तो भारत का विनाश अवश्यंभावी है। उन्होंने अपने एक व्याख्यान में कहा था—"भारतीय महिलाओं की स्थिति कैसी आतंकजनक हो उठी है! ब्रिटिश भारत की ९,९७,००,००० स्त्रियों में से सन् ई० १८८१ तक केवल २,००,००० स्त्रियां काम चलाऊ पढना लिखना सीख सकी हैं। हालांकि ब्रिटिश शासन को देश में स्थापित हुए प्रायः एक शताब्दि बीत चुकी!"

धीरे धीरे रमाबाई की धाक जमती गयी। हंटर साहब के अधीन स्त्री शिक्षा-संबन्धी कमीशन बैठा था, उसमें गवाही देने के लिये जो प्रतिनिधि चुने गये थे उनमें उनका भी नाम था। उन्होंने अपनी गवाही में कहा था कि "इस देश के ९९ फी सदी पुरुष स्त्री शिक्षा के विरुद्ध हैं।"

कट्टर पन्थियों के निन्तर विरोध और तिरस्कार से वह बहुत उकता गयी थीं। उनके पाखण्डवाद, धार्मिक गुण्डेबाजी, विधवाओं पर अकथनीय अत्याचार देखकर, और इतने पर भी उन्हीं का पक्ष प्रबल जानकर उनके हृदय में आतङ्क-सा छा गया था। वह किसी तरह से उनके नागपाश से मुक्ति पाना चाहती थीं। वह विलायत चली गयीं। वहां उन्होंने जब देखा कि सेन्ट मेरी के मन्दिर की सन्यस्ता स्त्रियां एक चिरकुमारी देवी की भक्ति में रत होने पर भी वेश्याओं के बीच किस प्रकार सहृदयता पूर्वक कार्य कर रही हैं, तो वह भारत की असहाय विधवाओं के प्रति वहां के पोंगा पंडितों और रक्तशोषी पुरोहितों के अमानवीय व्यवहार से पूर्वोक्त ईसाई बहिनों की सहृदयता की तुलना किये बिना न रह सकीं। उनके हृदय में तूफानी विचारों के बादल छाने लगे! बहुत

सोच-विचार के बाद वह ईसाई धर्म में दीक्षित हो गयीं। बड़े दुःख से वह धर्मान्तर में प्रवेश करने के लिये बाध्य हुई थीं। तथापि उन्होंने भारत में सुधार कार्य करने का विचार न छोड़ा। किन्तु अब जब वह भारत लौटीं तो उनकी प्रतिष्ठा बहुत कुछ नष्ट हो चुकी थी। क्योंकि अब उन्हें केवल कट्टर-पंथियों के ही नहीं, सुधारवादी हिन्दुओं के विरोध का भी सामना करना पड़ा। सभी लोग उन्हें सन्देह की दृष्टि से देखने लगे।

पर वह हताश न हुईं। अपने कार्य में लगी रहीं। बंबई में उन्होंने "शारदासदन" नाम की एक संस्था स्थापित की, जिसका उद्देश स्त्रियों—विशेष करके विधावाओं—को शिक्षा देने का था। पर चूँकि वह ईसाई धर्म में दीक्षित होने के कारण बदनाम हो चुकी थीं, इसलिये इस कार्य में उन्हें सफलता प्राप्त न हो सकी। पर उन्हें तो लगन थी, उन्होंने जब देखा कि धर्म के बाह्याचारों के फेर में पड़ने से उनके प्रति लोगों के मन में विरोधी संस्कार उत्पन्न हो गये हैं तो उन्होंने एक दूसरा उपाय सोचा। वह सन्यासिनी का वेष धारण कर गुप्त रूप से उत्तर भारत के तीर्थ स्थानों में अभागिनी विधवाओं की दशा का निरीक्षण करने के उद्देश्य से भ्रमण करने लगीं। जब भलीभांति अनुभव प्राप्त कर चुकीं तो उन्होंने इस संबन्ध में अपना मत इस प्रकार व्यक्त किया था—"सहस्रों विधवायें तीर्थ स्थानों में प्रतिवर्ष आती रहती हैं और पण्डे पुरोहितों के जाल में बुरी तरह से फंस जाती हैं। जब तक ये अनाथिनी, धर्मभ्रष्टा अबलायें यौवनावस्था में रहती हैं तब तक नर पिशाच पण्डे उन्हें अपने पास रखते हैं, जब वृद्ध होने लग जाती हैं तो वे निरुपाय दशा में छोड़ दी जाती हैं। इस जघन्य पाप और हृदयहीन पैशाचिकता का कुछ ठिकाना है!"

१८९६ में अकाल पड़ा था, उसमें रमाबाई ने मध्यप्रदेश तथा मध्यप्रांत में जाकर अकाल पीड़ित स्त्रियों तथा लड़कियों की सहायता के लिये एक सेवा-भवन खोला। उसमें प्रायः दो सहस्र स्त्रियां भरती हो गयी थीं। उन्होंने इन क्षुधा-पीडितों के भोजन का पूरा प्रबन्ध करके उनकी शिक्षा के लिये एक पाठशाला भी खोल दी। प्रायः सभी स्त्रियां वहां ऐसी थीं जिनके लिये काला अक्षर भैंस बराबर था। पर रमाबाई तो अपने धुन की पक्की थीं। उनके उद्योग से विद्यालय अत्यन्त शीघ्रता से उन्नति करता चला गया। जो लड़कियां ऊंचे दर्जे में चली जातीं उनसे नीचे दर्जों की लड़कियों को पढ़ाने का काम लया जाता था। मृत्यु पर्यन्त रमाबाई इस आश्रम का परिचालन करती रहीं। इस समय भी उक्त आश्रम में सैकड़ों विधवायें आश्रय पा रही हैं।

रमाबाई के विचारों का प्रभाव बहुत सी प्रतिष्ठित महिलाओं पर पड़ा। राणडे महोदय की धर्मपत्नी उन्हीं में से एक थीं। श्रीमती राणडे का विवाह ११ वर्ष की अवस्था में हुआ था। जब वह ससुराल आयीं तो उनके पति ने उन्हें स्वयं पढ़ाने का विचार किया। घर की स्त्रियों ने इसका बडा विरोध किया और कहा कि लिखना पढ़ना सीखकर बहू चरित्र-हीन बन जायगी। पर जज राणडे ने किसी की न सुनी और उन्हें सिखाते चले गये। जब वह अच्छी तरह पढ़-लिख गयीं तो रूढ़ी-पंथियों के विरोध की पूर्ण अवज्ञा करने की शक्ति उनमें आ गयी। उन्होंने अशिक्षिता लड़कियों और विधवाओं को शिक्षा प्रदान करने का विचार कर लिया और यथाशक्ति इस विचार को कार्यरूप में परिणत करने लगीं। अपने इस कार्य का क्षेत्र उन्होंने धीरे धीरे बढ़ा दिया और 'सेवा-सदन' नाम की एक संस्था खोली। इसका उद्देश्य 'शिक्षा तथा पारस्परिक सहायता प्रदान और राष्ट्रीय सेवा' था। कुछ ही समय के भीतर इस संस्था में एक हज़ार से अधिक विवाहिता स्त्रियां प्राथमिक शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के लिये भरती हो गयीं। दिन पर दिन उक्त सुधार-समिति उन्नति करती चली गयी और मातृत्व, शिशुरक्षण तथा निर्वाचनाधिकार संबन्धी सुधारों की ओर भी अग्रसर होती चली गयीं। श्रीमती रानडे के उद्योग का ही यह फल था कि बंबई प्रान्त में १९२२ में स्त्रियों को निर्वाचन का अधिकार प्राप्त हो गया।

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ஸ்திரீதர்மம்: தமிழ்பாகம்

—:o:—

இந்திய மாதர் சங்கத்தின் நோக்கங்கள்

1. இந்தியாவின் மக்களாயிருப்பதின் பொறுப்புகளை ஸ்திரீகளுக்கு உணர்த்துவது.

2. எல்லாச் சிறுவர்களுக்கும், சிறுமிகளுக்கும், கட்டாய ஆரம்பப்படிப்பு மூலமாய்க் கல்வி பெறும் பாத்யம் உண்டாக்குவது. (மதத்தைப்பற்றியும் படிப்பில் போதனை செய்யவேண்டும்.)

3. பால்ய விவாஹத்தை நிறுத்துவதும்; கலியாணமான பெண்கள் 16-வயதுக்கு முன் புருஷர்களுடன் வஸிப்பதைத் தடுப்பதும்.

4. முனிஸிபல் சபைகளுக்கும், சட்ட சபைகளுக்கும் ஓட்செய்யும் பாத்தியம் புருஷர்களுக்கிருப்பது போல ஸ்திரீகளுக்கும் கிடைக்கும்படி செய்வித்தல்.

5. முனிஸிபாலிடிகளிலும் தாலூகா போர்ட்டுகளிலும், லோகல் போர்ட்டுகளிலும், மாகாணச் சட்ட சபைகளிலும், இந்தியச் சட்ட சபையிலும், ஸ்திரீகளுக்குப் போதுமான பிரதி நிதிகள் பெறுதல்.

6. ஸ்திரீகள் ராஜாங்க சபை (Council of State) அங்கத்தினரைத் தேர்ந்தெடுப்பதற்கும், ராஜாங்க சபை அங்கத்தினராயிருப்பதற்கும் உரிமையை அடைதல்.

7. பாத்யதைகளிலும், முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு வேண்டிய மார்க்கங்களிலும் ஸ்திரீகளுக்கும் புருஷர்களுக்கும் ஸரிஸமத்துவத்தை நிலை நிறுத்தல்.

8. மனைவிகளாயும் தாய்மாராயும், இனிமேல் இந்தியாவை அரசாளப் போகும் இந்தியரை ஸன்மார்க்கத்தில் வளர்க்கும் கடமை ஸ்திரீகளுடையதாகையால் இந்தியா தேசத்தின் முன்னேற்றம் ஸ்திரீகளின் முயர்ச்சியால்தான் நிறைவேறும் என்பதை ஸ்திரீகளை உணரச் செய்வது.

9. தங்களுடைய ஆத்ம அபிவிருத்திக்காகவும், படிப்புக்காகவும் மற்றும் பிறருக்கு ஸேவை செய்வதற்காகவும் ஸ்திரீகளை ஸங்கங்களாகச் சேர்ப்பது.

மெம்பராதல்

மேற்படி கொள்கைகளையும் இந்த சங்கத்தின் அமைப்பையும் அங்கீகரிப்பவர்கள் அங்கத்தினராக ஆகலாம். இந்தக் கொள்கைகளையுடைய ஸ்திரீகளின் கூட்டங்களை இந்திய மாதரின் சங்கத்துடன் கிளைச்சங்கங்களாகச் சேர்த்துக் கொள்ளலாம்.

சங்கத்தின் அமைப்பு

இந்த சங்கத்திற்கு ஒரு தலைமை ஆபீஸ், எழும்பூரில் **பாந்தியன் கார்டன்ஸ்** என்ற இடத்தில் இருக்கிறது. 1917-ஆம் வருஷம் மேயீ 8-ஆம் உ இந்த ஸங்கம் ஸ்தாபிக்கப்பட்டது. அன்று முதல் மிகவும் விமர்ஸையாய் வளர்ந்துகொண்டு வருகிறது. இப்பொழுது 72 கிளைச் சங்கங்களும், 24 வேலை செய்யுமிடங்களும், 4000 மெம்பர்களும் இருக்கின்றனர்.

கிளைச் சங்கங்கள் கூடியவரை அநேக ஸ்தலங்களில் ஸ்தாபிக்கப்பட்டு வருகின்றன. இந்த கிளைச்சங்கங்கள் அங்குள்ள ஓர் காரியதரிசியால் நடத்தப்படும்.

ராஜ்ய விஷயங்களில் இச்சங்கம் சட்டசபை மூலமாய்ச் சீர்திருத்தங்களுக்காக வேலை செய்யும். இந்தச் சங்கத்தின் நோக்கங்களும் போக்குகளும் வேலைகளும் மத அநுஸரணையுடன் நடத்தப்படும். ஆனால் மதப்பிரிவுகளில் த் வேஷம் கிடையாது.

WOMEN'S INDIAN ASSOCIATION

இந்திய மாதர் சங்கம்.

நிர்வாஹிகள்—1932—33.

அக்ராசனர் :	டாக்டர் அன்னி பெஸண்டு
உப அக்ராஸனர் :	மிஸிஸ். டோரதி ஜீன ராஜ தாஸ
,, :	,, ஆர். ராமசந்திர ராவ்
,, :	,, டாக்டர் (மிஸிஸ்) முத்து லக்ஷ்மி ரெட்டி
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பொக்கிஷதாரி :	,, மிஸிஸ். லக்ஷ்மி டேவிட், சென்னை

நிர்வாஹ ஸபை

மிஸிஸ். ராமசாமி சிவன், சென்னை
மிஸிஸ். ராஜீவி சிவராவ், சென்னை
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மிஸிஸ். ஹீராபாய் டாடா, பம்பாய்
மிஸ். ஹிம்மா லாஸரஸ், பெங்குளூர்

போதன நிர்வாக ஸபை

,எல்லாக் கிளைகளின் காரியதரிசிகள்

ஸங்கத்தின் பத்திரிகை
‘ஸ்திரீ தர்மம்’

பத்திராதிபர் : மிஸிஸ் தாதாபாய்
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தலைமை ஆபீஸ் ; பாந்தியன் கார்டன்ஸ், எக்மோர், சென்னை

இந்திய மாதர் ஸங்கம் மெம்பராவதற்கு வருஷச்சந்தா குறைந்தது		ரூ.	1	0	0
ஸ்திரீ தர்மம் மெம்பர்களுக்கு	,,	,,	3	0	0
மற்றவர்களுக்கு	,,	,,	5	0	0
தமிழ்பாக மட்டும்	,,	,,	1	0	0

மெம்பர் அல்லது ஸ்திரீதர்மச் சந்தாதார் ஆக விரும்புபவர், அடியிற் கண்ட விலாசத்துக்கு எழுதவும் :—

ஸெக்ரடேரி,
மாதர் இந்திய ஸங்கம்,
பாந்தியன் கார்டன்
எழும்பூர் மதராஸ்.

TAMIL

ஸ்திரீ தர்மம் தமிழ்பாகம் 1933-ம௵ நவம்பர்மீ

ஹிந்துமதத்தின் தூய்மை - காந்திஜியின் கருத்து.

1. சென்ற அக்டோபர் மீ 2உ யன்று மத்திய மாகாணத்தில் வார்தா என்னுமிடத்தில், ஓர் மஹாநாட்டில் காந்திஜியைப் பேசும்படி கேட்டுக்கொண்டனர். அப்பொழுது காந்திஜி தனக்குப் பேசுவதற்கு சக்தியில்லாமையால், தம் அபிப்பிராயத்தை எழுத்துமூலம் விவரித்தார். அவர் சொன்னதின் ஸாராம்சமாவது, "நான் இளமைப் பருவமுதல் நமது தர்ம சாஸ்த்திரங்களை ஊக்கத்துடன் படித்திருக்கிறேன். கற்றவரிடம் விசாரித்தும் அறிந்திருக்கிறேன், அதில் சில மனிதரை தீண்டக்கூடாத ஜாதியர் என்று விலக்கித்தள்ளும் தீயவழக்கத்துக்கு சிறிதும் ஆதாரமில்லை. நம்சாஸ்த்திரங்கள் எவ்வுயிருள்ளும் இருப்பது ஈசன் என்றும் எவ்வுயிர்க்கும் அன்புடன் தொண்டுசெய்வதே ஈசனது உத்தம ஸேவை என்றும் போதிக்கின்றன. ஆகையால் இத்தீயவழக்கம் நம்சாஸ்த்திரங்களுக்கு விரோதமானது. சென்ற ௵ செப்டம்பர் மாதத்தில் பூனாநகரில், பண்டித மாளவியா உள்பட உத்தம சீலமுடைய பல ஹிந்துக்கள்கூடி, இத்தீய வழக்கத்தை ஒழித்துவிடுவது நம் ஹிந்துமதத்துக்கு வேண்டிய முக்கிய சீர்திருத்தம் என உறுதிகொண்டோம். அந்த வாக்குறுதியை நிறைவேற்றுவது ஹிந்துக்களது முதல் கடமை" என்றார்.

2. பிறகு சில பௌத்தமத ஸந்நியாஸிகள் அவரிடம் வந்து, தாங்கள் இந்தியாவில் பௌத்த மதத்தை பரப்புவதற்கு ஊழியம்செய்யப் போவதால்: அதில் அவர் அபிப்பிராயத்தைக் கேட்டனர். அதற்கு அவர் "நீங்கள் நல்ல நோக்கத்துடன் ஜனங்கள் நன்மைக்கு உழைக்க முயலுவதைப்பற்றி எனக்கு மிக ஸந்தோஷம்! ஆனால் என் அபிப்பிராயத்தில் புத்தர் உபதேசித்த மதம், ஹிந்து மதத்திலேயே உளது; அவர் உபதேசித்த உத்தம தர்மம், மற்ற நாடுகளில்விட இந்தியாவிலேயேதான் தற்காலம் நிலைபெற்றும் வருகிறது. அவர் மெய் ஹிந்து வாதலால், ஜனங்கள் மறந்திருந்த ஹிந்துமதத்தின் மர்மங்களை புது ரீதியாக எடுத்துரைத்தார். புதிதாக ஒன்றும் சொல்லவில்லை! மனிதர்மீது மட்டுமல்ல, எவ்வுயிர்மீதும் அன்புபாராட்ட வேண்டுமென்பது அவர் உபதேசித்துள்ள ஓர் முக்கிய அம்சம். இம்முறை மற்ற தேசங்களில்விட ஹிந்துக்களுள் தான் அதிகமாக நிலைபெற்றிருக்கிறது. எந்த தர்மமும் வாயால்மட்டும் பிரஸங்கித்தால் ஒருவருக்கும் உதவியாகாது. இனந்தவறாது, ஒவ்வொரு நிமிஷமும் பேச்சு, நினைவு, செய்கை இவையாவிலும் அதை அனுஷ்டித்தாலன்றி ஓர் பயனுமில்லை" என்றார்.

3. தீண்டாமையை ஒழிப்பது ஹிந்துமதத்தின் சீர்திருத்தம் என்பதை சற்று கவனிப்போம். நம் ஹிந்துமதம் என்பது எது? நம் மதத்தில் உத்தம நிலையையும் சொல்லியிருக்கிறது. அதை சரிவர அனுஷ்டிக்க முடியாதவருக்கு அவர்கள் சக்திக்குத் தக்கவாறு படிப்படியாக தாழ்ந்த வழிகளையும் சொல்லி

யிருக்கிறது. ஆனால் தர்மசாஸ்திரங்களுள் யாவும் அவரவர் தன்னை திருத்திக் கொள்ளவே ஏற்பட்டவை. ஒவ்வொருவனும் தன்னை திருத்திக்கொள்ள முயலவேண்டும்: பிறரை ஈசன் வடிவமாகப்பார்த்து, அன்பு ஸேவை செய்ய வேண்டும்; இதுவே உத்தமமுறை. இதை ஸ்ரீராமக்ருஷ்ணர் முதலிய பெரியோர் அனுஷ்டித்தனர்.

"யாவும் அறிவின் பொலிவாம் ஈசனே என்று பார்ப்பவரே, கண்ணுடையவர்."

அகில வஸ்துக்களுள்ளும் என் நினைவு;

அகில ஜந்துக்களுள்ளும் ஈசன் நினைவும், தானே என்று நினைவும் கொண்டு, அகில ஜந்துக்களையும் பகவானிடமும் தன்னிடமும் எவன் காண்கிறானோ அவனே பாகவத உத்தமன்" என்ற விடங்களால் இதை காண்க.

4. ஆனால் யாவரும் இத்தூய முறையை செய்கையில் கைப்பற்றுவது மிகக்கடினம். ஒருவன் "உத்தம அனுபவமுடைய ப்ராமணனையும், பசுவையும் யானையையும், நாயையும், நாய் மாம்சம் உண்பவனையும், ஸமமாக நோக்குபவனே உத்தமன்" என்று பகவத்கீதையில் சொல்லியிருப்பதைப் படித்தான். உடனே இவ்வனைவருக்கும் ஸேவைசெய்ய முயன்றான். பிராமணனுக்கு ஓர் வஸ்திரம் கொடுத்தான். அதை அவர் ப்ரீதியுடன் அணிந்துகொண்டார். யானைக்கும், பசுவுக்கும், நாய்க்கு எப்படி வஸ்திரம் உடுத்துவது? ஓர் பலகையில் பிராமணனை அமர்த்தி அவருக்கு அன்னமிட்டான். யானை, பசு, நாயைப் பலகையில் உட்கார்த்த முடியவில்லை. யானையும் பசுவும், புல்லையும், தவிட்டையுமே விரும்பின, நாயோ அமேத்யத்தை விரும்பியது. ஒவ்வொரு ஜந்துவின் இயல்பும் வேறு வேறாயிருக்கிறது. ஆகவே ஒவ்வொரு ஜந்துவுக்கும் ஸேவைசெய்யும் முறை அதனின் ஸ்பாவத்தையொட்டி பேதமாகிறது.

5. பிறகு, உதவி என்பது எது? ஒருவன் களைப்படைந்திருக்கிறான். என்ன வேண்டுமென்றால், கள்ளும் மாமிசமும் வேண்டுமென்கிறான். வேறொரு உயிரைக்கொன்று, கள் அளித்து அவனுக்கு பிரீதிசெய்வதா? ஒருவன் என் எதிரியைக் கொன்றால்தான் எனக்கு பிரீதி என்கிறான்; ஒருவன், வேறொருவன் மனைவியுடன் கூடுவதே எனக்கு பிரீதி என்கிறான். ஒருவனுக்கு ஜுரமாயிருக்கிறது, ஹல்வா வேண்டுமென்கிறான். ஓர் குழந்தை: அது நதியில் குதிக்க வேண்டுமென்கிறது: தீப்பந்தத்தைக் கையில் தரவேண்டுமென்கிறது. இவர்கள் வேண்டுவதையெல்லாம் ஸாதிப்பது இவர்களது ஸேவையாகுமா?

6. ஆகவே நமக்கு யாவும் ஈசனாகத் தோற்றாமல், பேதம் தோன்றும் வரை, அவரவரது இயல்புக்கும் நிலைமைக்கும் தக்கவாறு சேவைசெய்ய வேண்டியிருக்கிறது. செய்பவரது தகுதிக்குத்தக்கபடியும் இம்முறையை மாற்றவேண்டியிருக்கிறது. இயல்பில் பொறுமையுடையவனை நோக்கி, "அ[illegible]னை ஒருவன் அடித்தால், அது ஈசன் செயலே என்று நினைத்து அவன்மீது அன்பே பொழி" என்றால் தகும். இயல்பில் வெகு கோபமுடையவனிடம் இப்படிச் சொன்னால், சிறிதும் கவனியான். அவனிடம் "அப்பா! நீ ஒரு அடிக்கு பதில் பத்தடி அடியாதே! இரண்டு அடியோடு நிறுத்திக்கொள்," என்றால் அவனால் முடியும். அதுபோலவே பெண் ஆசையும், பணத்தாசையும் பேய் போல் பிடித்தவரிடம், "ஆசையை ஒழி" என்றால் நடக்காது. "ஒரு பெண்ணுக்குக் கட்டுப்படு" "பணம் சம்பாதி! ஆனால் மோசம் செய்யாதே! ஓர் பாகத்தை பிறர் உதவிக்கு செலவிடு" என்றால் நடக்கும்; சொன்னவாறெல்லாம் நடப்பது யாவராலும் முடியாது.

7. இவ்வாறு நாட்டோர் பற்பலரது பற்பல ஸ்பாவங்கள் நிலைமைகளை பற்றித் தீர்க்கத் தரிசனத்துடன் யோசித்து, நம் ரிஷிகள் வர்ணாசிரமதர்மம் என்ற தூய முறைகளை ஏற்படுத்தினர்.

ஆனால் அந்த முறைகள் தற்காலத்தில் அழிந்துபோய்விட்டன. ஜாதி முறைகள் அசுத்தமாய்விட்டன. நமக்குள் ஒருவனையாவது, நமது சாஸ்திரங்களின்படி இன்ன வர்ணம், ஆசிரமத்தைச் சேர்ந்தவன் என்று உரைப்பது கடினமாயிருக்கிறது.

தீண்டாமை என்பது உத்தமமாது முறையல்லவென்பது தெளிவாகத் தெரியும். அது எக்காலத்தில், யாரால், யாருக்கு ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டது என்பது ஒருவருக்கும் தெரியாது. எல்லாம் ஊஹித்துச் சொல்லவேண்டியதுதான். நமக்குள் தீண்டாமை பலவிதமாக அனுஷ்டிக்கப்படுகிறது. அது பரதர்மம் அல்ல, ஓர் ஆசாரனை: அல்லது வழக்கம். நமக்குள், ப்ரஹிஷ்டையான பெண்டுகள் மாதம் மூன்றுநாள் விலக்கமாயிருந்து, யாராவது கிட்டவந்தால் "தீண்டாதே! தீண்டாதே!" என்று கத்தி விலகி ஓடுவதை இன்னும் கிராமாந்தரங்களில் காணலாம். அது போலவே "ஸூதகத் தீட்டு" உள்ளவர்களையும் விலக்கித் தள்ளுகிறோம். நம்முள் நியமமுள்ள கிழவிகள், சிறுமிகள் தொட்ட உணவை உண்பதில்லை. அவர்கள் தொட்டால், குளிக்கிறார்கள். இதனால், அவர்களிடம் அன்பில்லை என்று அர்த்தமில்லை. பின் இது ஏன்? ஓர் செடி இளம் பருவத்திலிருக்கும்போது, அதை ஆடு மாடுகள் தின்று விடாதபடி அதைச் சுற்றி வேலி போடுகிறோம். அது மரமாய் வளர்ந்த பிறகு, வேலி அவசியமில்லை. அது ஆடு மாடுக்கு நிழலும் உணவும் கொடுக்கும். அது போலவே நம்முள் யாவரையும் ஈசனாகப் பார்க்கும் ஆத்ம சக்திகள் வளுக்கவில்லை. அதற்கு ஸ்நானம், ஜெபம், பூஜை, தியானம் முதலிய பலமுறைகளால் சிலர் முயலுகிறோம். இப்பொழுது இப்பழக்கங்களில்லாதவர் பழக்கத்தால், நமக்குள்ள அல்பத தூய்மையும் நாசமாகாதபடி காப்பது அவசியம். இது நம் நன்மைக்காக மட்டுமல்ல நம்மை இப்பொழுது காப்பாற்றி, முதிர்ச்சி பெறச் செய்தால்தான் பிறகு யாவருக்கும் பேருதவி செய்யும் மரம்போல ஆகமுடியும். ஆகையால் இவ்வாறு இப்பழக்கமும் தவமுறையும் உடையவரை, இவையில்லாதவர் அணுகாதிருக்கச் செய்வது, இருபுறத்தாரது நன்மைக்கே. தீண்டாமை என்ற வழக்கம் இவ்வாறு உதித்திருக்கலாம். இது தக்ஷிணத்தில்தான் மிக்க அதிகமாயிருப்பதும், இங்கு ஆசாரம் என்ற தவமுறையை யாவரும் அழுத்துவதும், இப்படி நினைக்க இடம் தருகின்றன. இது ஓர் வழக்கமே. ஓர் ஆசாரனை முறையே. இதை நம் மதத்தின் ஓர் தர்மமாகச் சொல்வது சரியன்று.

(8) ஆயினும் தற்காலத்தில் இத்தவ முறைகளை மெய்யாக ஒருவரும் அனுஷ்டிப்பதில்லை. ஆகவே இவ்வழக்கத்தைமட்டும் விடாதிருப்பது மிக்க கொடுமையையும், பாபத்தையும், பரஹிம்ஸையையுமே விளைவிக்கிறது.

தீண்டாமையை விடக்கூடாதென்பவர் தாம் தூய தவமுறைகளில் முயற்சிகொள்வார்களாயின், அதில் ஓர் நியாயமுளது எனலாம். ஆனால் அவர்கள் பிறரைப் பழிப்பதைத் தவிர, தாம் தூய ஸநாதன தர்ம முறையைச் சிறிதும் கைப்பற்ற முயலுவதில்லை. ஆகவே அவர்கள் சொல்வது வீம்புப் பிடிவாதமாகத் தோன்றுகிறது. அது நம் மதத்தின் மெய் நிலையை நோக்கும் முறையல்ல.

தீண்டாமையை ஒழிக்கவேண்டுமென்பவரும், ஞான முயற்சியாலும் உள்ளத்தின் விரிவாலும் சொல்பவர் மிகச் சிலரே. ஆகவே பலர் பேச்சில் மட்

டும் சொல்வதும், செய்கையில் பலவாறுமாகிறது. ஒருவன் தீண்டாமையை ஒழிக்கவேண்டுமென்று பிரஸங்கம் செய்தான். மறுநாள் அதைக் கேட்டிருந்த ஓர் தீண்டா சாதிக்காரன் கள்குடித்த வெறியில், உடை ஒன்றுமின்றி அவன் வீட்டுக்குள் வந்து 'அண்ணு! நாம் ஒன்றல்லவா! எனக்கு படுக்க இடம் கொடு' என்ருன். இவன் கொடுக்கவேண்டியது தானே! கொடுத்தான் என்று வைத்துக் கொள்வோம். அவன் தாயார் முன்காலத்து கிழவி: மிக தயவுடையவள்! மிகத் தவமுடையவள்! அவளிடம் இந்த ஏழைக்கு உதவிசெய்ய வேண்டுமென்று கேட்டிருந்தால் அவனுக்கு "வீடும், நிலமும், உடையும்" அளிக்க பணம் கொடுத்திருப்பாள். ஆனல் அவன் வீட்டுக்குள் வந்தால் தீண்டல் என்றும் அதற்காக மூன்று நாள், தான் உண்ணுவிரத மிருக்கவேண்டு மென்றும் அவளுக்கு எண்ணம். இதுவும் நம் விதி என்று அவள் மூன்று நாள் உண்ணுதிருந்தாள். இதினல் அந்த 'தீண்டா ஜாதியானுக்கு' உதவியாயிற்ரு! பிறகு ஊரார் இந்த வீட்டுக்கு வருவதை ஒழித்தார்கள். தாய் தந்தையாருக்கு மிகக் கஷ்டமாயிற்று. ஸம்மந்திகள் இங்கு வராதிருந்தார்கள். சிறுமிகளுக்கு வரன் கிடைக்கவில்லே. இவ்வாறு ஓர் விஞடியில் செய்யும் ஓர் செய்கையால் பற்பலருக்குப் பற்பல துன்பங்கள் வரலாம். நம் செய்கையால் நமக்கு கஷ்டம் வருத்திக்கொள்ளலாமேயன்றி, பிறருக்குக் கஷ்டம் வருத்துவது ஹிம்ஸையாகும்.

9. ஆகையால் நாட்டிலுள்ள ஓர் தீயவழக்கத்தை ஒழிப்பது திடீரென்று யாவரும் செய்யக்கூடியதல்ல. அதை ஒழிப்பதற்கு பற்பலருக்கும், அறிவின் தெளிவும், உள்ளத்தின் விரிவும் வருத்தவேண்டும்: அது தானே நழுவும்படி செய்யவேண்டும். நாம் இவ்விதம் ஒழிக்க வேண்டியது தீண்டாமைமட்டுமல்ல. பல எரும்புகள் ஓர் புழுவைப் பிடுங்கித் தின்பதுபோல், பற்பல தீயவழக்கங்கள் நம்நாட்டின் உயிரை உருஞ்சுகின்றன. முன் 1932 ஷு ஸெப்டம்பர் மீ ஸ்த்ரீ தர்மத்தில் "எழும்பரிக்கும் புழு" என்றவிடத்தில் இதை ஆராய்ந்திருக்கிருேம். இத்திய வழக்கங்கள் யாவுக்கும் காரணம்: நாட்டிலுள்ளவருக்கு நம் மெய் ஸநாதன தர்மத்திலும், யக்ஞமுறையிலும் தெளிவும், உறுதிநிலேயும் இல்லாமையே! மெய்யான ஆத்ம உணர்ச்சியை வருத்திஞல், பிறர் நன்மையே தேடித் தன்நயமிழக்கும் யக்ஞமுறையை மறுபடி நிலேநிறுத்திஞல், இந்த தீயவழக்கங்கள் யாவும் வேரோடு ஒழியும். ஞானம் என்ற தீயே அகில அழுக்கையும் போக்கும்: அஃதன்றி ஒரோர் தீயவழக்கத்தைமட்டும் ஒழிக்க முயலுவது அறைகுறை வேலேயாகும். ஆகையால், நாம் ஒவ்வொருவரும் இயன்றவாறு ஆத்ம உணர்ச்சியையும், யக்ஞமுறையையும் கைப்பற்றிஞல் உள்ளம் ஒளிபெறும்: அன்பால் விரியும்: அப்பொழுதுதான் தீண்டாமை முதலிய அகில குறைவுகளும் வேரோடு ஒழியும்.

தீபாவளி

விமலா "அம்மா! சென்ற அக்டோபர்மாஸத்தில் நாடெங்குள் தீபாவளி பண்டிகை நடைபெற்றதே, இந்த பண்டிகை எதை உத்தேசித்து நடத்துவது? இது நம் ஹிந்துமதத்தின் ஓர் அம்சமா! அல்லது ஓர் தமாஷ்தானு?

பாரதத்தாய் :—நம் நாட்டில் செய்யும் எவ்வித விசேஷங்களையும், ஈசனது ஸேவையாகவே கொண்டாடுவது நம் தாயமுறை. ஆகவே ஸ்ரீக்ருஷ்ணன், ஸத்யபாமையின் உதவியால் நரகன் என்ற அஸுரனை வதைத்து, அவ்வஸுரன் சிறைபிடித்து வைத்திருந்த 16 ஆயிரம் ராஜகன்னிகைகளை விவாஹம் செய்துகொண்டதைக் கொண்டாடுவதற்காக, யாவரும் அன்று மங்களஸ்நானம் செய்து, கலியாணம்போல் கொண்டாடுகிறார்கள்.

விமலா :—அதென்ன கதை: அதை எங்கே படித்தறியலாம்?

பா-தாயி :—அதை ஸ்ரீமத்பாகவதம், 10-வது ஸ்கந்தம், 59-வது அத்யாயத்தில் காணலாம். அதைச் சுருக்கமாகச் சொல்லுகிறேன், கேள்! முன்காலத்தில் நரகன் என்று ஓர் அஸுரன் இருந்தான்.

விமலா —அஸுரன் என்றால் என்ன?

பா-தாயி :—எதைக்கண்டாலும் "எனக்கு, எனக்கு" என்று கைப்பற்றி தனக்குள் அடக்கமுயலுபவர் அஸுரர். இவர் முரண்டாக தனக்குத்தோன்றியபடி தான் செய்வார்கள்: மெய்ப்பொருள் எது என்று பணிவுடனும் தவிப்புடனும் விசாரித்தறிந்து, அதற்கேற்க நடக்க முயலமாட்டார்கள். இவர்களுக்கு தன் மனமே சட்டம். இவர்கள் நினைவில் உலகு அனைத்தும் உலகத்தோர் அனைவரும் தனது ஸுகத்துக்கே ஏற்பட்டன.

விமலா :—நமக்குள்ளும் இந்த ஸ்வபாவம் இருக்கிறதே! நாமும் அஸுரர் தானு?

பா-தாயி :—இந்த குணம் மிகுதியாயிருக்குமட்டும் நாம் அஸுரரே.

விமலா :—ஸரி: நரகன் விஷயம் என்ன?

பா-தாயி :—அந்த அஸுரன் பூமிதேவியின் மகன். தாயிடமிருந்து பொறுமை, அன்பு என்ற குணங்களைப்பெறுமல், "மண்போன்ற" மூடத்தன்மையையே அடைந்தான். ஆனால் மிகப்பலமுடையவன். உலகினுள் பற்பல அரசர்களைத் தோற்கடித்து, அவர்களது பெண்கள் 16 ஆயிரம்பேரை தன் நகரத்துக்கு கொண்டுபோனுன். தன்னை மணம்புரியச் சொன்னுன். அவர்கள் சம்மதிக்கவில்லை, ஆகையால் அவர்களைக் காவலில் வைத்தான். அப்பெண்கள் ஈசனையே ஏகமனதுடன் சரணமடைந்தனர்.

விமலா :—ஈசன் காப்பாற்றினுரு?

பா-தாயி :—ஆமாம்! ஆனுல் ஈசன் காப்பாற்றுவது நாம் நினைத்தபடியெல்லாம், காப்பாற்றமாட்டான். உறியகாலத்தில், யாவருக்கும் உத்தமக்ஷேமம் வரும்படி அனுக்ரஹம் செய்வான். அப்பெண்களுக்கு உடனே விடிவுகாலம் வரவில்லை. முதலில் அவனது பீடையும், துன்பமுமே அதிகரித்தன. ஆயினும் அவர்களுக்கு ஈசன் காப்பாற்றுவான் என்ற நம்பிக்கை மலைபோலிருந்தது. ஆகையால், படும்துயரங்கள் மனதுக்குத் தெரியவே

யில்லை. நம்பிக்கையின் வலிமை அத்தகையது: முடிவில் அடையவேண்டிய இன்பத்தை தற்காலமே மனதில் உதிக்கச்செய்து, காலத்தை மறக்கச்செய்யும்.

விமலா:—பிறகு என்ன நடந்தது?

பா-தாயீ:—நரகன் உலகையெல்லாம் துன்பப்படுத்திவிட்டு, தேவலோகம் சென்றான். அங்கு தேவர்களையும் பிடித்து, இந்திரன் என்ற தேவ அரசனை துரத்திவிட்டு அவன் பதவியைக் கைக்கொண்டான், 'தேவர்கள்' என்பவர் ஈசன் முறைப்படி தாம் நடக்கவும், உலகத்தோரை நடக்கச்செய்யவும் முயலுபவர். அவர்களது நற்செய்கைகளுக்குத்தடை வரவே ஸ்ரீக்ருஷ்ணன் நரகாஸுரனை அடக்குவதற்குச் சென்றான். அவர் போருக்குச் சென்றபோது, ஸத்யபாமை அவருக்கு உதவியாய்ச்சென்றாள். ஸ்ரீக்ருஷ்ணன் நரகாஸுரனை வென்று, அவனால் அடைபட்ட 16 ஆயிரம் ராஜகன்னிகைகளையும் விடுவித்தான். அவர்கள் அவன்மீதே பேரன்பு நிலைகொண்டனர். ஆகவே அவர் ஐக்யம் செய்துகொண்டார்.

விமலா:—பல மனைவிகளை மணம் புரிவது நாகரீகமா! அவ்வாறே ஓர் ஸ்திரீ பல கணவர்களை மணம்புரிந்துகொண்டால் அனியாயம் என்று சொல்லவில்லையா! இதென்ன ஸ்ரீக்ருஷ்ணனது த்வாரகாலீலை உலகத்தோருக்கு தூயதர்ம நிலையைக்காட்டும் விரதம் பூண்டது என்பார்களே! இந்த கலியாணத்தையா யாவரும் கொண்டாடுகிறார்கள்.

பா-தாயீ:—விவாஹம் என்பதின் மெய்நோக்கத்தையும், ஈசனது மெய்நிலையையும் நீ இப்படிக்கேட்கிறாய். விவாஹத்தின் மெய்நோக்கம், இருபுறத்தோரும் ஆத்ம ஐக்யத்துடன், ஈசனுடன் லயித்தலே. சரீரப்புணர்ச்சியால் மெய்விவாஹத்துக்கு ஸாதகமுமில்லை: பாதகமுமில்லை. பெரியோர் உணர்ச்சியில் ஈசன் ஒருவனே உலகனைத்துக்கும் ஓர் புருஷன். ஜீவர் யாவரும் இவ்வாறு அவனுடன் ஆத்ம ஐக்கியமடையவேண்டிய மனைவிகள். அதாவது அவனையே நாடவேண்டிய கிளை ஆத்மா. அந்த 16 ஆயிரம் ஸ்த்ரீகளும் பேரன்பால் இவ்வித ஆத்ம ஐக்கியம் பெற்றதால், அது முனிவர்களும், யோகிகளும் யாவரும் அன்புடன் போற்றிக் கொண்டாடவேண்டிய உத்தமச்செய்கையே. ஆகையால் தீபாவளி விரதத்தன்று இந்த ராஜகன்னியர்போல், நாம் யாவரும் அஸுர குணத்துக்கு ஈடுபடுவதை எதிர்த்து தூயபேரன்பால் ஈசனிடம் ஈடுபடமுயலவேண்டும். இதுவே தீபாவளிபண்டிகையின் மெய்நோக்கம்.

ராஜாராம் மோஹன்ராய்

பிறப்பு

ராம் மோஹன்ராய் வங்காள மாகாணத்தில் உள்ள பர்த்வான் என்னும் ஜில்லாவில் இருக்கும் ராதாநகர் என்னும் சிறிய கிராமத்தில் வைஷ்ணவ பிராமண குடும்பத்தில் 1772-ம் வருஷம் மே மாதம் 22-ஆம் தேதி பிறந்தார்.

இவர் சிறுகுழந்தையாய் இருக்கும்பொழுதே இவர் தகப்பன் ராமகாந்தர் இவருக்கு விவாஹம் செய்துவைத்தார். முதல் மனைவியாகிய இளங்குழந்தை சின்னஞ் சிறுவயதிலே இறந்துவிட்டது. அப்போது ராம்மோஹனருக்கு வயது எட்டு. ஆனபோதிலும் இவரது தந்தை, குழந்தை மனைவியை இழந்த மறுவருஷத்திற்குள் இவருக்கு இரு பெண் குழந்தைகளை மணஞ் செய்துவைத்தார்.

தமது ராய் பாட்னா நகரத்தில் அக்காலத்தில் மதிப்புக்காரணமாயிருந்த பாரசீக அரபி பாஷைகளைக் கற்றுத்தேர்ந்தார். தமது தாய்மொழியாகி வங்காள பாஷையிலும் புலமை அடைந்தார்.

மனஸ்தாபமும் வெளியேறலும்.

பதினாறு வயது இருக்கும்போது ராம்மோஹனர் விக்கிரக ஆராதனையால் வரும்
தீமையைப்பற்றி ஒரு சிறுநூல் எழுதிக்கொண்டிருந்தார். வைதிகநெறி வழுவாத ராம
காந்தருக்கு இது பிடிக்கவில்லை. இதனால் தகப்பனுக்கும் பிள்ளைக்கும் மனஸ்தாபம்
ஏற்பட்டது. உண்மைக்காக உயிரையும் அர்ப்பணம் செய்யக்கூடிய ராம்மோஹனர்
வீட்டைவிட்டு வெளியேறிவிட்டார்.

வெளியேறியே ராம் மோஹனர் ஆயிரக்கணக்கான மைல்கள் நடந்து திபெத்துக்குப்
புத்தமதத்தைப்பற்றிப் படிக்கச்சென்றார். அங்கே லாமா என்னும் மதக்குருவை வணங்
கும் குருட்டுப் பழக்கத்தை எதிர்த்துப்பேசினார். இதனால் இவரது உயிர் ஆபத்துக்குள்ளா
யிற்று. திபெத்துப் பெண்களின் பெருங்கருணையால் இவர் அக்காட்டிலிருந்து உயிர்தப்பி
வெளியேறினார். பெண்கள் தமக்குச்செய்த நன்றியை இவர் ஒருநாளும் மறக்கவில்லை.
இச்செயலாற்றான் இவர் பெண்பாலரின் நன்மைக்காக உழைக்கக் கங்கணங் கட்டிக்
கொண்டார்.

காசியும் சம்ஸ்கிருத கல்வியும்

திபெத்திலிருந்து திரும்பிய ராம்மோஹனர் காசியில் சில வருஷகாலம் தங்கி
யிருந்து அங்கே மகான்களிடத்தில் சமஸ்கிருத பாஷையைக் கற்றுக்கொண்டு அதில்
உள்ள வேதங்களிலும் உபநிஷத்துக்களிலும் மற்றச் சாஸ்திரங்களிலும் பூரணஞானம்
பெற்றார். ஆகச் சிறுவயதிலேயே இவர் சகலாகம பண்டிதராக விளங்கினார்.

அப்பொழுது இவர் தந்தை ராயை திரும்ப அழைத்தார். இருவரும் ஸமாதான
மாய் தன் க்ருஹத்தில் வைத்தார்.

1803-ம் வருஷம் இவர் தந்தை இறந்தார். தந்தை இறந்துபோகவும் ரமது
மோஹனர் கிழக்கிந்தியக் கம்பெனியில் உத்தியோகம் ஏற்றுக்கொண்டு அந்த உத்தியோ
கத்தில் படிப்படியாக உயர்ந்து உதவிக் கலக்டர் பதவியை அடைந்தார். உத்தியோகத்தில்
பல கஷ்டங்கள் இருந்தபோதிலும் அவர் அவற்றை எல்லாம் பொருட்படுத்தாமல் அவை
களுக்கு இடையே தமது 22-ஆம் வயதில் ஆங்கிலம் படிக்க ஆரம்பித்து வெகு சீக்கி
ரத்தில் பல ஆங்கிலப்புலவரும் புகழும்படியாக எழுதப்பேசப் புலமை அடைந்துவிட்டார்.
முயற்சி இருந்தால் முடியாதது ஒன்றும் இல்லை. இதோடு விட்டாரா? இவர் இர்துஸ்
தானி, ஹிப்ரு, கிரேக்கம், லத்தின், பிரான்சு பாஷைகளையும் கற்றுக்கொண்டார். ஆக
இம்மகான் பத்து மொழிகளில் வல்லுநராய் இருந்தார்.

மத ஆராய்ச்சி

மதமே ராம்மோஹனருக்கு உயிர். ஆகவே பல மதங்களையும் ஆராயலானார்.
முன்னமே இவருக்கு வேதாந்தம், பௌத்தம், இஸ்லாம் இவைகளைப்பற்றிய விஷயங்கள்
நன்கு தெரியும். எனினும் இப்போது இவர் சமண மதத்தையும் கிறிஸ்தவ மதத்தையும்
ஆராய்ந்தார். இவ்வாறு மோஹனர் தாம் இனிச்செய்யப்போகும் சேவைகளுக்கு ஏற்றவ
ராகச் செய்துகொண்டார். பலதுறையும் அறிந்த பெரிய கல்விமானாக இருந்ததால்
அல்லவா இவருக்கு மிகப் பெரிய மகத்தான காரியங்களை பலருடைய எதிர்ப்புக்களுக்கு
இடையேசெய்ய முடிந்தது?

பத்துவருடகாலம் வேலைசெய்ததும் இவர் தன் உத்தியோகத்திலிருந்து நீங்கிக்
கொண்டு கல்கத்தா நகரை அடைந்து அங்கே ஸ்திரமாக அமர்ந்ததால் அதிக மும்முரமாய்
பொதுநல வேலைகளில் இவர் தலையிட்டுக்கொண்டார். 'ஆத்மீய சபை' என்ற ஒரு
சங்கத்தை இவர் ஸ்தாபித்தார். இங்கே மத ஆராய்ச்சி செய்யப்பட்டது. சிலகாலத்துக்
குப் பிறகு ராயர், ஜனங்கள் வேதங்களைப் படித்தறியும்பொருட்டு 'வேதமந்திரம்' என்ற
கூட்டத்தையும் ஆரம்பித்தார். அதனால் ஜனங்கள் இந்துமதத்தில் தோன்றியுள்ள பல
அநாசாரங்களை நீக்கவும், கடவுள் ஒருவரே என்பதை அறிந்து அவரைச் சரியான முறை
யில் வழிபடவும் முயற்சித்தார். முதல்முதலாக ராம்மோஹன் ராய் வேதாந்த சூத்தி
ரத்தை வங்காள பாஷையில் மொழிபெயர்த்தார். பின்பு அதே பாஷையில் வேதங்களின்

உண்மைகளைச் சுருக்கமாக வெளியிட்டார். அதன் பிறகு உபநிஷத்துக்களில் சிலவற்றை வங்காள பாஷையிலும் இங்கிலீஷிலும் மொழிபெயர்த்தார். இவர் இப்புத்தகங்களை அச்சிட்டு ஜனங்களுக்கு இலவசமாகக் கொடுத்து உதவினுர்.

சில கல்விமான்கள் இவரது கொள்கைகளை ஏற்றுக்கொண்டார்கள் எனவே இவர் தம்முடைய கொள்கைகளைப் பூண்டவர்கள் தெய்வத்தை தகுந்த முறையில் சாதிமத வேற்றுமை இல்லாமல் வணங்க 1828-ம் வருஷத்தில் பிரம்ம சமாஜத்தை ஸ்தாபித்தார். பிரம்ம சமாஜத்தைச் சேர்ந்தவர்கள், சர்வேசனைத் தொழுவதற்கு ஓர் ஆலயமும் கட்டி வைத்தார். வேதங்களிலும் உபநிஷத்துக்களிலும் கூறப்பட்டுள்ள இந்து மதத்தை ஆதார மாகக்கொண்டு மற்றைய மதங்களில் காணப்படும் அருமையான உண்மையையும் ஏற்றுக் கொண்டு, ஜாதி, மதம், அந்தஸ்து முதலிய வித்தியாசம் இல்லாமல் யாவரும் ஒன்றுகூடி பரம்பொருளை வணங்கவே இப்புதிய மதம் ஏற்பட்டது. இதில் தேசபேதம், மதபேதம், ஜாதிபேதம் இல்லாமல் யாவரும் ஆடம்பரம் இல்லாமல் வழிபடலாம். விக்கிரக ஆராதனை அங்குக் கிடையாது.

பிரம்ம சமாஜ நோக்கம்

தர்மம், சீலம், பக்தி, தயை இவற்றை ஜனங்களுக்கு ஊட்டி யாவரும் சகோதரர் என்னும் சிறந்த எண்ணத்தைப் பிறப்பிக்கவேண்டும் என்பதே இம்மதத்தின் நோக்கம்.

பிரம்மசமாஜக் கொள்கைகள்

கடவுள் ஒருவரே என்பதுதான்.

சமூகச் சீர்திருத்தம்
(பெண்களுக்காக)
உடன்கட்டை ஏறுதலை ஒழித்தல்

ராம் மோஹன்ராய் கண்டனஞ்செய்து சீர்திருத்த எண்ணிய சமூக ஆசாரங்களுள் பல ஸ்திரீகளுக்கு உரியனவாய் இருந்தன. அக்காலத்தில் ஸ்திரீகளின் நிலைமை பரித பிக்கும் வண்ணம் இருந்தது. பெண்கள் உடன்கட்டை ஏறுதல் என்னும் ஓர் அநாசாரம் அக்காலத்தில் வழக்கத்தில் இருந்தது. இது வேதத்தில் சொல்லப்படவில்லை. பிற்காலத் தில் இது எப்படியோ புகுந்துவிட்டது. மதசம்பந்தம் இல்லாத இப்பழக்கம் நெடுநாளாக வேர் ஊன்றிவிட்டது. இவ்வழக்கத்தின்படி கணவன் இறந்தான் என்றால் அவன் சவத் தோடு அவன் மனைவியும் உடன்கட்டை ஏறி தீயில் சாகவேண்டும். சூடுபொறுக்க மாட்டாமல் நெருப்பிலிருந்து பெண்கள் எழுந்தால் அருகில் உள்ளோர் அவர்களை மூங்கி லால் அடித்து அழுத்தி தீயில் தள்ளிவிடுவார்கள். நினைத்தாலும் ஆ! மனம் நடுங்குகிறது! சொல்லவும் வாய் கூசுகிறது. இக்கொடிய வழக்கத்தை ஆங்கில அரசும் நிறுத்தவில்லை. இக்கொடிய வழக்கமும் நீங்கவில்லை. 1828-ம் வருஷத்தில் மாத்திரம் கல்கத்தாவின் எல் லைக்குள் 300 பெண்கள் உடன்கட்டை ஏறுதல் என்னும் தீயவழக்கத்துக்கு ஆளானுர்கள். 1815-ம் வருஷத்திலிருந்து 1818-ம் வருஷம் வரையில், அதாவது மூன்றுவருஷத்தில், 2365 பெண்கள் உடன்கட்டை ஏறுதல் என்ற பெயரினுல் ஐயோ! உயிரோடு சுட் டெரிக்கப்பட்டார்கள். இவ்வழக்கத்தின் கோரத்தை ராம் மோஹன்ராய் தம் சகோதரர் ஜகன்மோஹனர் இறந்தபோது நேரில் கண்டார். தம் அண்ணியார் சூடுபொறுக்கமுடி யாமல் எழுந்துவரப் பிரயத்தனம் செய்தபோது அருகில் இருந்தவர்கள் அவளைத் தடியி னுல் அடித்துத் தீக்கு உணவாக்கினுர்கள். இச்சம்பவம் இவரது இளகிய மனத்தைப் புண்படுத்தி இத்தீய கோரே பயங்கரமான வழக்கத்தை நிறுத்த மனதிற்கு உறுதி கொடுத் தது. அதனுல் இவர் மயானத்திற்குச்சென்று உடன்கட்டை ஏற நிற்கும் பெண்மணி களை விடுவிக்க முயன்றுர். உடன்கட்டை ஏற வேண்டாம் என்று வேண்டுவார். இப் பொல்லாத வழக்கத்தைக் கண்டித்து ஒரு புத்தகமும் வெளியிட்டார். நல்ல காலமாக வில்லியம் பெண்டிங்க் என்பவர் இந்தியாவுக்குக் கவர்னர் ஜெனாலாக வந்தார். இவ ருடைய உதவியால் ராம் மோஹன்ராய் 1829-ம் வருஷத்தில் உடன்கட்டை ஏறும் வழக்கத்தை அறவே ஒழிக்க சட்டம் ஏற்படும்படி செய்தார். தமது முயற்சிகள் சித்தி பெற்றதற்கு மனமகிழ்ந்து கடவுளுக்கு நன்றி பாராட்டினுர்.

சிசுவிவாகம், ஒருவன் பல ஸ்திரீகளை மணஞ்செய்துகொள்ளல், ஸ்திரீகளுக்குக் குடும்ப ஆஸ்தியில் பங்கு இல்லாமை, விதவைகள் விவாகம் இல்லாமல் இருப்பது முதலிய கெட்ட ஆசாரங்களும் ஸ்திரீகளுக்குத் துன்பத்தை விளைவித்துவந்தன. இவ்விஷயங்களிலும் சீர்திருத்தங்களைச் செய்யவேண்டும் என்று ராம்மோஹன்ராய் எண்ணங்கொண்டு அவ்வாறே முயற்சிசெய்தார். இப்படிப்பட்ட சீர்திருத்தங்கள் பொதுஜன சம்மதமாய் ஏற்பட்டால்தான் நிரந்தரமாய் இருக்கும் எனத்தெரிந்து ராம்மோஹன்ராய் அதற்காக ஜனங்களுக்கு உண்மையையும் நியாயத்தையும் தெரிவிக்கும்பொருட்டுப் பல ஆதாரங்களுடன் பிரசங்கங்களைச்செய்தும் புஸ்தகங்களை எழுதி வெளியிட்டும் தம்மால் இயன்ற முயற்சிகளைச் செய்துவந்தார்.

பெண்களைக் கலியாணத்துக்காக விற்பதிலும் ஒருவன் பல பெண்களை மணஞ்செய்து கொள்வதிலும் வெறுப்புக்கொண்டு இவைகளை ஒழிக்கவும் பாடுபட்டார். தம்முடைய குமாரனாவது பந்துக்களில் எவனாவது ஒருத்திக்குமேல் கலியாணஞ் செய்துகொண்டால் அவன் தம் சொத்துக்கு உரியன் ஆகான் என்று உயில்சாசனம் எழுதிவைத்தார் என்றால் இவருக்கும் பல தாரங்களை மணந்துகொள்வதில் எவ்வளவு வெறுப்பு இருந்தது என்பது தெரியவரும். ஆண்களைப்போல் பெண்களுக்குச் சமசுதந்தரம் அளிக்கவேண்டும் என்றும் நாட்டை முன்னுக்குக் கொண்டுவரக்கூடிய பெண்களுக்குக் கல்வி அளிக்க வேண்டும் என்றும் பத்திரிகை மூலமாய் ஜனங்களுக்கு அறிவு புகட்டிவந்தார்.

ஜாதி வித்தியாசம்

ஒற்றுமை வேண்டும் என்றால் ஜாதிப்பிரிவுகள் அறவே ஒழியவேண்டும் என்றும் பலமுறை இவர் உபந்நியசித்தும் எழுதியும் உள்ளார். பிரமசமாஜம் ஏற்பட்டதற்கு இதுவும் ஒரு காரணமாகும்.

கல்விச் சீர்திருத்தம்

அக்காலத்தில் ஜனங்களுக்குச் சரியான கல்வி இல்லாததனால் குருட்டுக்கொள்கைகளிலும் மூடப்பழக்கங்களிலும் நம்பிக்கை மிகுந்திருந்தது. இந்த மூடக்கொள்கைகளையும் குருட்டு நம்பிக்கைகளையும் ஒழித்து நூதனக்கொள்கையை ஜனங்களிடத்தில் பரப்ப வேண்டும் என்றால் சம்ஸ்கிருதக் கல்விபோதாது. அந்தக் கல்விக்கு அவ்வளவு ஆற்றலும் இல்லை. ஆகையால் ராஜா ராம்மோஹன் ராய், வில்லியம் பெண்டிங்க், மெக்காலே ஆகிய இருபெருமக்கள் உதவியைக்கொண்டு நூதன கல்வியை நாடெங்கும் பரப்பினார். ஆங்கிலக் கல்விக்கு மக்கள் அடிமையாகவேண்டும் என்பது இவருடைய நோக்கம் அன்று. மேனாட்டு முறையில் சையன்ஸ் கலையில் ஜனங்கள் விருத்தியடைந்தால் இந்தியநாட்டின் எதிர்கால வாழ்க்கை சிறப்புறும் என்பதே இவர் நூதனக் கல்வியைப் பரப்பியதற்குக்காரணம். இக்கொள்கையினால் இவரே தம் சொந்தச்செலவில் கல்கத்தாவில் ஆங்கிலபாடசாலை ஒன்று ஏற்படுத்தி நடத்திவந்தார். இவர் இவ்வாறு பரப்பிய நூதனக்கல்வி இப்போது பெரும் பலனை அளித்துள்ளது. இதனால் இவர் பெரிய தீர்க்கதரிசி என்றறிகிறோம். பொது ஜனங்களுக்குக் கல்வி புகட்டவேண்டி முதல் முதலாக தாய்மொழியில் பத்திரிகை ஆரம்பித்தவர் இவரே.

பாஷாபி விருத்தி

இதோடு இவர் வங்காள பாஷையை அபிவிருத்திசெய்தார். முதல் முதல் நல்ல வசன நூல்களை எழுதினார்; ஆங்கிலக் குறியீடுகளை (Punctuations) அப்பாஷையில் புகுத்தினார். இவருக்குச் சம்ஸ்கிருதபாஷையில் வெறுப்புக்கிடையாது. ஜனங்கள் வேதங்களையும் உபநிஷத்துக்களையும் மற்ற அரிய நூல்களையும் படிக்கும்பொருட்டு சம்ஸ்கிருத வேதாந்த பாடசாலையும் இவரால் ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டது. இம்மகான் அரிய அரசியல் ஞானியாகவும் இருந்தார்; உயர்ந்த தேசாபிமானியாகவும் இருந்தார். இவரது தேசாபிமானம் தேசம், மதம் என்ற எல்லைக்குள் அகப்படவில்லை; குறுகிய நோக்கத்தோடு இருக்கவில்லை. இவர் அரசியல் முறையில் மகமதியர் இந்துக்கள் என்ற வித்தியாசத்தைப் பாராட்டவே இல்லை.

இவர் தாம் ஜமீன்தாராய் இருந்தும் குடிகளின் கஷ்டங்களுக்கு வருந்தி அவற்றை நீக்கப் பாடுபட்டார்.

பத்திரிகைகளுக்கு அரசாங்கத்தார் வாய்ப்பூட்டு போட்டபோது ராம் மோஹன் ராய் அரசாங்கத்தைக் கண்டித்து எதிர்த்தார். அதன்பலன் பின்னால் கைகூடிற்று.

கிராண்ட் ஜூரிச்சட்டம்

1827-ம் வருஷத்தில் ஜூரிச்சட்டம் அமுலுக்கு வந்தது. இதன் பிரகாரம் கிறிஸ்தவர்கள் ஜூரர்களாக இருந்து இந்துக்களையும் மகமதியர்களையும் விசாரிக்கலாம். ஆனால் இந்துக்களும் மகமதியர்களும் அவ்வாறு செய்யமுடியாது. இந்த அநியாயத்தை ராம்மோஹனர் அஞ்சாமல் எதிர்த்து அரசாங்கத்தாரைக் கண்டித்தார்.

இந்தியப்பணம் இங்கிலாந்து போவதற்கு நியாயம் இல்லை என்று வாதாடியவரும் இம்மோஹனரே.

எனவே இவர், மதம், சமூகம், கல்வி, அரசியல், பொருளாதாரம் என்ற இத்துறையில் எல்லாம் இறங்கி வேலைசெய்துள்ளார்.

ஐரோப்பாவுக்குச் செல்லுதல்

ராஜ ராம் மோஹனர் ஐரோப்பாவுக்குச்சென்று ஆங்குள்ள ஜனங்களின் நடை உடை பாவனை அரசியல் முறை இவைகளை நேரிற்கண்டு கற்க விரும்பினார். டில்லிச் சக்கரவர்த்தியாக அக்காலத்தில் இருந்த இரண்டாம் அக்பர் இவருக்கு 'ராஜா' என்று பட்டம் கொடுத்து இவரைத் தம்முடைய சொந்த விஷயமாகத் தூதாக இங்கிலாந்துக்குப் போகவேண்டினர். அதே சமயம் இங்கிலாந்தில் கிழக்கிந்திய கம்பெனியார் தம்முடைய சாசனத்தைப் புதுப்பிக்கும் சமயம். இச்சாசனத்தைப் புதுப்பிப்பதற்குமுன் இந்திய விஷயங்களை அறிவதற்காகப் பார்லிமெண்டார் கமிட்டி ஒன்று நியமித்திருந்தனர். இவர் இக்கமிட்டியின் முன் சாக்ஷியம்கூறித் தேசத்திற்கு நன்மை செய்யவேண்டும் என்று எண்ணினார். இதே சமயத்தில் வைதிகக்கட்சியினர் உடன்கட்டை ஏறுதலை ஒழித்த சட்டத்தை ரத்துசெய்யவேண்டும் என்று கொடுத்த மனுவும் இங்கிலாந்தில் உள்ள கோர்ட்டில் விசாரணைக்கு வருவதாய் இருந்தது. ஆகவே தமது குன்றிய தேக பலத்தைப் பற்றிக் கவலைப்படாமலும் ஆறு நீண்ட மாதங்கள் செய்யவேண்டிய கடற்பிரயாணத்தைப் பொருட்படுத்தாமலும் இவர், 1830-ம் வருஷம் நவம்பர் மாதம் புறப்பட்டு 1831-ம் வருஷம் ஏப்ரல் இங்கிலாந்து போய்ச்சேர்ந்தார்.

அங்கே இவரைப் பல பிரமுகர்கள் தரிசித்தார்கள். பல கோயில்களிலும் பல இடங்களிலும் இவருடைய பிரசங்கங்கள் முழங்கின. நான்காம் வில்லியம் தமது பட்டாபிஷேக காலத்தில் இவரை வெளிநாட்டு ராஜதூதராக வரவேற்றுக் கௌரவப்படுத்தினர். இவர் குறித்துப்போன விஷயங்கள் ஏறக்குறைய நிறைவேறின.

இங்கிலாந்திலிருந்தபோது இவர் அங்கிருந்து பிரான்சுக்குப்போக எண்ணினார் அதற்காகப் பாஸ்போர்ட் வாங்கவேண்டிய நிபந்தனை இருந்தது. சுயேச்சை விருப்பமுள்ள ராம்மோஹனருக்கு இந்நிபந்தனைக்கு உட்படுவது முடியாதிருந்தது. ஆகையால் இவர் இந்நிபந்தனையோடு அங்குச்செல்ல மறுத்தார். பிரஞ்சு அரசாங்கத்தார் இந்த நிபந்தனையின்றி இவரை அங்குவர அனுமதி அளித்தனர். அதன்மேல் ராம்மோஹனர் 1832-ம் வருஷம் பிரான்சுக்கு விஜயம்செய்தார். அப்போது பிரஞ்சுமன்னர் இவருக்கு விருந்தளித்து உபசரித்தனர். இவரும் பிரஞ்சுமன்னரோடு வேற்றுமை இன்றி உண்டு மகிழ்ந்தார். செப்டம்பர் மாதம் முதலிலேயே இங்கிலாந்துக்குத் திரும்பிவிட்டார்.

இறுதிக்கால வாழ்வு

இங்கிலாந்துக்கு வந்த சில நாட்களுக்குள் ராம்மோஹனருக்கு ஜுரநோய் கண்டு 1833-ம் வருஷம் செப்டம்பரில் இறந்தார். இவர் செய்கைகளை நவீன இந்தியாவுக்கு மூலகாரணராயிருந்த ஒவ்வொரு இந்தியமக்களும் ஹ்ருதயத்தில் வைக்கவேண்டியது. பிடிப்பதில் பின்வாங்காத சிங்கம்; பால வயதில் பத்து பாஷைகளை அறிந்த பண்டித சிகாமணி; இடைவிடாத முயற்சிக்கு இருப்பிடம். 'என் கடன் தொண்டு செய்வதே' என்பது இவரது நோக்கம். ஜாதிமத பேதங்களை விட்டொழித்த தேசாபிமானி இவரை விட யாருளர்? பாஷாபிமானியும் இவரே. கடவுள் பக்தியும் ஒழுக்கமும் இவரிடத்தில் தாண்டவமாடின. சுருக்கிக்கூறினுல் உலகத்தைக் காக்கவந்த உத்தமர் இவரே.

இவர் தேகவியோகமடைந்து நூறுவருடங்கள் ஆயின. இவர் நம்மை விட்டு மறைந்தாலும் இவர்செய்த முயற்சியின் பலன்கள் இன்றும் நின்று நிலவுகின்றன. இவரது வழியில்தான் இந்தியநாடு செல்கிறது.

நாம் தமிழ் நாட்டினரே! நீங்கள் இம்மகானுடைய ஞாபகார்த்தமாகச் செய்ய வேண்டியது யாது? இவருடைய வழிகளைப்பற்றி நாட்டைக்கொடுக்கும் ஜாதிவேற்றுமை, தீண்டாமை, பெண்ணடிமை முதலிய நோய்களை நீக்கி இந்திய நாட்டை நன்னிலையில் நிறுத்த எழுங்கள்.

கடைசியில் ஒரு சிறு வேண்டுகோள்.

இவருடைய ஞாபகார்த்தமாக சென்னையில் ஒரு கட்டிடம் அமைக்க எண்ணி இருப்பதால் அதற்கு நம் இந்தியமக்கள் எல்லாரும் தங்களுடைய பகுமானத்தை காட்டி அறிகுறியாக த்ரவிய ஸகாயம் செய்யவேண்டயது கடமை. மனதிருப்போர் கீழ்கண்ட விலாசத்திற்கு அனுப்பவும்.

விலாசம்: ஸெக்ரடரி

இந்திய மாதர் சங்கம்

பாந்தியன் கார்டன் எழும்பூர்

மதராஸ்.

TELUGU.

స్థానం నరసింహ్వారావుగారి భావప్రదర్శనములు

చిత్రాంగి పాత్ర పోషణ !!!

(శ్రీమతి దరిశి సుభద్రమ్మ)

ని గూఢమైన భావమును, ముచ్చటైన ప్రణయభావములను, రాతినైన కఱగించు శోకరసమును, రాచపుత్రికల స్వభావ, గంభీర పౌరుష భావములను నాటకరంగమున ప్రదర్శించుటయందు శ్రీయుత స్థానం నరసింహారావు మన యాంధ్రలోకమున చాల సమర్థులని చెప్పుట కెంతమాత్రము సంశయములేదు. వీరు చిరుత ప్రాయముననే మానవ స్వభావమును, అందులో స్త్రీ స్వభావమును గుర్తెరింగి, తద్భావ ప్రదర్శనము గావించుట, ప్రేక్షకులకు మితిలేని యానందాశ్చర్యములు గలుగుచున్నవి. హావభావములయం దెంతమాత్రము నుపేక్షజూపక, విద్యావిశారదయు, సరసురాలునునగు స్త్రీయొక్క సహజభావముల నితడు నప్రయాసముగ జూపగలిగిన సమర్థుడు. సమయస్ఫూర్తిగ, గమనము, యొయ్యారము, ముఖమున భావప్రదర్శనము, హావభావ విలాసముల జూపుటయందు వీరికి అసమానశక్తి గలదు. పురుషుడుగానుండి విద్యావతిగనుండు స్త్రీలక్షణముల ప్రదర్శించు శక్తి ఇతని కేలాగు కలిగెనాయని మన కాశ్చర్యమగుచుండును. మరియొక విశేష మేమన, లేశమైనను పశ్చిమదేశీయుల ననుకరింపక భారత రమణీమణులనే యనుకరించుచు, స్వాతంత్ర్యపు టాలోచనలతో, ధీశక్తితో స్వకల్పనములై యున్న వీరిభావముల తిరమణీయముగనున్నవి.

శోకరసమును జూపుచు, వెంటనే, మరు క్షణముననే ప్రేమ రసమునో, లేక యానంద రసమునో జూపగల యద్భుతశక్తి యితనికి గలదు. ఇట్టి మార్పులు వెంట వెంటనే మనసున గలుగజేసికొనుట కష్టతరమైనను, వీరియందు సాధ్యమయినది.

ఎట్టి ధీమంతులకుగాని, ఎట్టి సమర్థులకుగాని ప్రపంచమున నేవో లోపములు లేక పోవు. అయ్యది నైజము. అందరికి నివర్తించెడి యాస్వభావగుణము స్థానంవారికి

గూడ వర్తింపకపోదు. కాని, వీరియందు గొప్ప లోపము లేవియు లేకపోయినను, అతి సూక్ష్మములైనవైనను కొన్ని లేకపోలేదు.

అందు మొట్టమొదటిది, ఆభరణములు, పైటచెఱగు, ముంగురులు మున్నగునవి అనవసర సమయములందు సవరించుకొనుచుండుట. రెండవది, నడకలోని యొయ్యారము నుత్ప్రేక్షతో జూపుట. అయ్యది స్త్రీస్వభావమును మించియున్నటుల గన్పట్టుచున్నది. మూడవది, విద్యావతికి తగినటుల స్వల్పాభరణాలంకృత మాత్రమే గాకపోవుట.

ఇవి సామాన్యముగా పామరులకు గ్రహింగణించి, వ్రేలిడి చూపునంతటి గొప్పవిగా లేవు. చింతామణి పాత్రను ధరించినపుడు నరసింహారావుగారు, వేశ్యాయులనలను నలి చతురతతో చూపుటయేగాక, మోసము, కుయుక్తి మున్నగు దుర్గుణములకు లోబడివలసివచ్చెగదాయని, యంతరాత్మచేనుద్బోధింపబడి పరితాపము వెల్లడించుట నిపుణతతో జూపిరి. తదుపరి, విరాగిణియై, విరాగిణీ స్వభావములను పారమార్థికబుద్ధి, ఈశ్వరభక్తి మున్నగువాటిని గంభీరముగా జూపెను.

చిత్రాంగి పాత్రను ధరించునపుడు రాజపుత్రికకుండు సహజభావములను, బహుచక్కగా ప్రదర్శించెను. ప్రణయమునందు చాకచక్యము, శోకమునందు దీనత్వము, నీచగుణ ప్రదర్శనమునందు చిన్నతనము, కడపట, ఉన్నత నీచభావముల పరస్పర వైరుధ్యము (Struggle or conflict between hight and lower natures) న కొంత విషాదమును చూపిరి. పూర్వాచార పరాయణుల మూర్ఖపట్టును గమనింపక, నవీనలోకమునకు తగినట్లు భావములను మార్చ సాహసించినందులకు ఉన్నతభావములే తమ మనంబుల కాధారముగా జేసికొను పండితు లానందించియుందురు. కాని, యింకను కొంతమార్పును గలిగించినచో మన సంఘములయందుండు లోపముల రూపుమాపుటకు యిట్టి నాటకములు దోడ్పడగలవు. కవులుకొన్ని సందర్భములయందు ఒకపాత్రను సకల కల్యాణగుణ సంపన్నునిజేయుట. మరియొకపాత్రను నీచగుణ పూరితునిగా చేయుట కలవడియుండిరి. అట్టివారు, సారస్వతా జ్ఞానమున, కవితా సామర్థ్యమున, గొప్పవారైయుండిన నుండవచ్చును. కాని మానవ సహజ స్వభావములను చక్కగా గుర్తెరుంగరనియే చెప్పనగు. ప్రపంచమున యేవ్యక్తిగాని యెట్టి లోపములులేక సుగుణరాశియై యొప్పుట యరుదు, అసాధ్యము. అస్వాభావికము. అటులనే యెట్టి నీచునియందును కొన్ని కొన్ని సుగుణచిహ్నములు లేకపోవు. సుగుణవంతుడనువానికి మనోబలము. ఉన్నతాదర్శములు, ఉన్నత భావములు, న్యాయాన్యాయ విచక్షణ యెక్కువగా నుండవచ్చును, కాని యేదో యొకమూల కొంత మనోదౌర్బల్య ముండకపోదు. అట్టివాని మనో

రాజ్యమున కొంత పోరాటము గలిగినపుడు దుస్స్వభావమును అణగద్రొక్కి సుస్వభావము జయభేరి వాయించుట నిక్కమే. ఇట్టివానికి, వాని చుట్టుప్రక్కలనుండు తగిన పరిస్థితులు, వాతావరణము, సాంగత్యము మున్నగునవి తోడ్పడును.

అనీచుడనునట్టివానికి నిట్టి పోరాటమే వాని మనోరాజ్యమునందు గలిగి మనోదౌర్బల్యకతనమున వాడు నీచస్వభావమునకు లోబడుట తటసించును. ఇట్టివాడు సహితము, చుట్టునుండు పరిస్థితులు, చేయునట్టి సాంగత్యము, దేశకాల పాత్రములు మంచివిగా నున్నచో సజ్జనుడుగా మారిపోవుననుట పొరబాటు కాదుగదా?

శ్రీయుత స్థానం నరసింహారావు, పూర్వాచార పరాయణులకు తనయందు అయిష్టము జనించునని జడియక చిత్రాంగి చివఱకు ప్రేమచే జయింపబడి ఆత్మహత్యను గావించుకొనెనని విషాద సారంగధర అను నాటకమును విషాద చిత్రాంగిగాకూడ మార్చుటకు సాహసించినను పైవ్రాసిన ఉన్నత నీచభావ, సుగుణ దుర్గుణ పరస్పర వైరుధ్యములను పరిస్థితుల బట్టి వాటి వాటి దిగ్విజయమును, మొదటినుండియు యేల చూపకపోయెనో తెలియకయున్నది. విషాద సారంగధరయందు మార్పు తేనొల్లనిచో, నవీన సారంగధరయని ప్రకటించి, మనోశాస్త్రము (Psychology) ననుసరించి యీ నాటకమును ప్రదర్శించినచో బాగుగ నుండెడిది. ప్రతివ్యక్తికిని పరిపూర్ణస్వాతంత్ర్యముండుతీరి, సనాతనాభిప్రాయులగని వీరు భయపడ నవసరముగూడ లేదుకదా.

చిత్రాంగి ప్రథమమునుండియు నీచురాలగుచో అంత్యమున తటాలున ఉన్నతాదర్శములు గలదియగుట యసంభవము. మొదటినుండి, చివరవరకును నీచగుణములు తప్ప సుగుణములు లేకయుండుటగూడ నసంభవమే. కాబట్టి, ప్రథమమునుండియు చిత్రాంగి మనోరాజ్యమున జరుగు పోరాటమున జిక్కి యొక్కక్షణము మనోదౌర్బల్యమునకు లోబడుట, యుత్తర క్షణముననే తన దౌర్బల్యమునుండి విముఖియగుట ప్రదర్శించినచో మానవ స్వభావమునకు తగియుండును.

ఇట్టి పోరాటము మొదటినుండియు చిత్రాంగి ప్రదర్శించుచు, తుదకు తాను నీచస్వభావమున కెఱయై సారంగధరునికి తనచే గలిగిన యిడుమలకు పరితపించుచు ఇట్టి విషాద మంతటికిని రాజనరేంద్రుడే కారణమని యాతని యెదుట జెప్పి ఆత్మహత్యను గావించుకొనినటుల ప్రదర్శించినచో, యిట్టి దారుణమునకు, తానుగదా మూల కారణమని రాజరాజనరేంద్రుడు పశ్చాత్తాప పడుటకు వీలుండెడిది. ఇట్టిమార్పును గ్రంథకర్తగారుగాని, వారు చేయకున్న శ్రీయుత నరసింహారావుగారు ప్రోత్సహించి చేయించినగాని బాగుండెడిది.

దరిశి సుభద్రమ్మ.

Printed and Published by D. Manickam at Payne & Co., 17, Mount Road, Madras.